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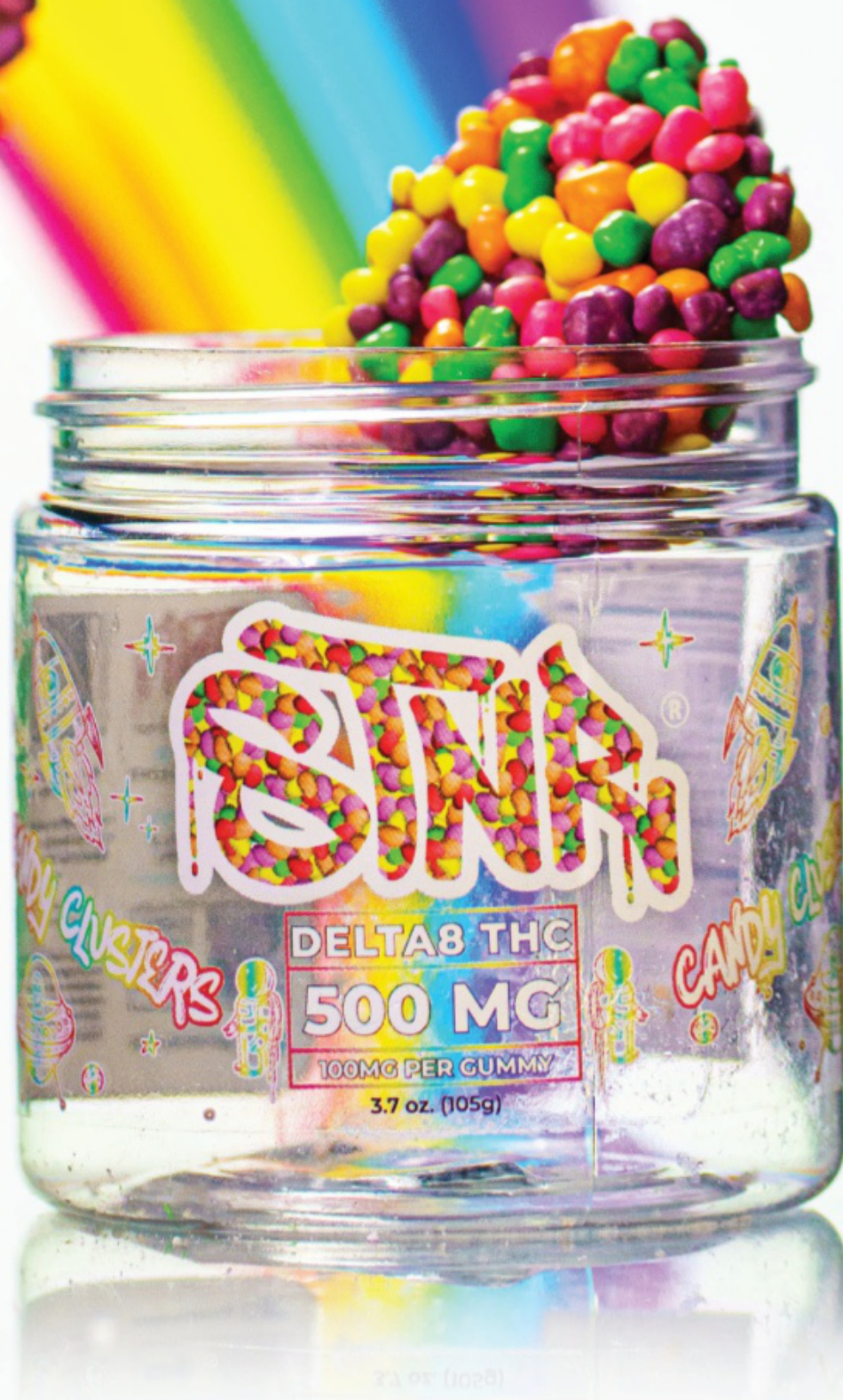
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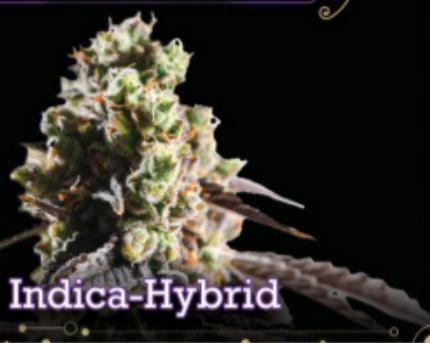
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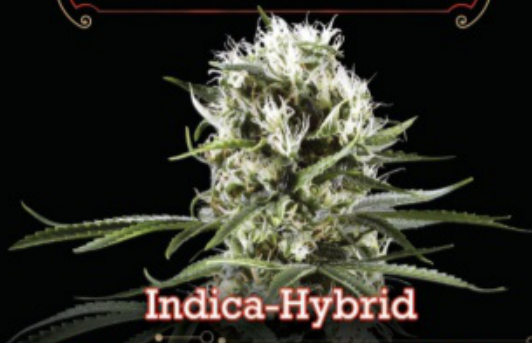
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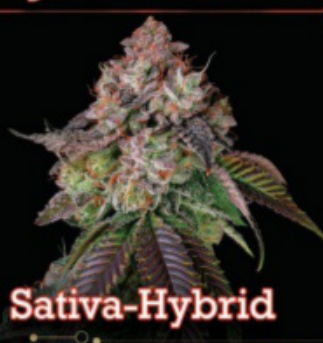
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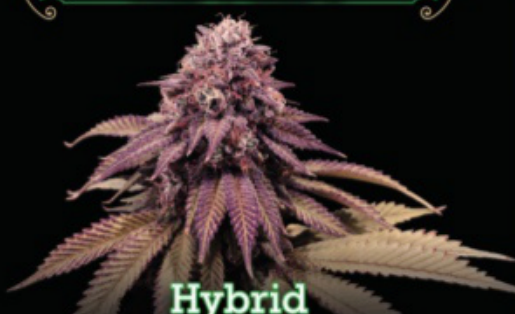
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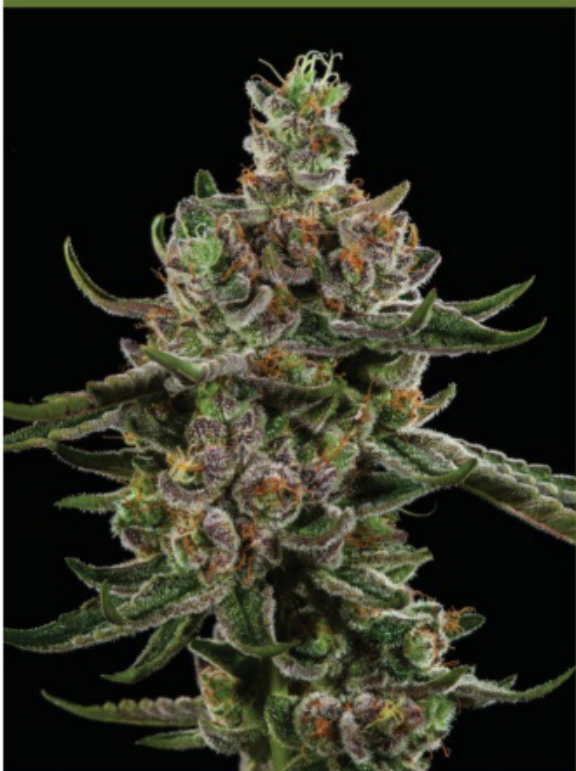
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PHOTOS BY NABEEL AL-AZIZ, @GINJA.CLUB

ON THE COVER



The Best of 2022

It's that time of year once again—2022 has come and gone in a flash, and it's been another prosperous year for cannabis. With the pandemic finally fading in our rearview mirror, cannabis has continued its upwards trajectory to expand in more states, and offer more variety than ever before. From fire flower and genetics to the emergence of hash holes and products that consumers chose as the best in their home states, this is your one-stop-shop for pot.

LEMON CHERRY GELATO
GROWN BY SKUNK FEATHER / PHOTO: JUSTIN CANNABIS

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Humility Over Hype

The cultivators behind Sense produce some of the most dank offerings on the market while maintaining a humble attitude. From their award-winning Pink Certz to the tasty Purple Churro and Kush Mints, join us on a visit into their downtown San Francisco grow room.



PHOTO: TRIPLE LINDY, COURTESY BLUEPRINT

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The Best Strains of 2022

It's no easy feat to sift through thousands of strains to identify the trendiest buds from the past year, but author Jimi Devine dove deep into some of this year's heaviest hitters. These five strains passed the test and showcase some of this year's best cultivars, as well as the cultivators who grew them.

48

Best of People's Choice Products

The *High Times* People's Choice Awards have taken the nation by storm, putting the consumers in charge of determining which cannabis products are the best. Check out our breakdown of a few standout entries among many of our award winners of 2022.

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The Year of the Hash Hole

Hash holes—aka massive joints filled with cannabis concentrate straight down the center—are making an exclusive debut in *High Times* this year. Check out which brands are doing it right, and have been dubbed this year's hash hole MVPs by none other than our very own VP of Content, Jon Cappetta.



HAPPY EMPLOYEES AND GOOD WEED

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Douglas Gordon
Co-owners
and cultivators
Ascension Farm

HOW THE BEST GROWERS GROW BETTER.

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STEWARDS OF NATURE

IF THERE'S ONE TRUTH THAT GROUNDS ME IN THESE turbulent times, it's that weed is good. When the news of the world rocks outside our doors, plants continue to grow. Nature hums on. In terms of cannabis, many people are stewards of nature, tending to plants so that the plants may tend to us.

These pages are a celebration of many different types of relationships, starting with

the relationship between a cannabis breeder and the cultivar they create. Smoke any of the strains in our Top Strains of 2022 list from a competent and impassioned grower and tell us we're wrong. These flowers are incredible. Think of the now in weed like the Renaissance. We're in Florence, Italy and artistic creativity is as high as the ceiling of the dome at the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore. As a cultural movement, cannabis has moved out of the Middle Ages and the world is absolutely flowering with inspiration. Please take advantage of the iconic times in which we exist by smoking these already iconic strains because growers are developing more kinds now and forever—it only gets better from here.

There's also the important relationship we have with the strains we smoke. Blowing clouds of flowers can create contentment within. We want nothing more than for you to experience that, and we believe communing with all types of plants, including but not exclusive to cannabis, will get you closer.

Finally, smoking weed together, something that we can no longer take for granted in these pandemic years, clearly builds relationships between ourselves and others.

This issue is a guide for exploring the best of what 2022 brought to our lives. And it's true, most of that was weed, but it's also so much more. 

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DEAR *HIGH TIMES*,

THE BAY AREA LATINO CANNABIS ALLIANCE, BALCA, IS AN ORGANIZATION curating bilingual cannabis community-centered publications. We focus on publishing the perspectives of budtenders, legacy operators, farmers, advocates, and entrepreneurs from all parts of the industry—cultivation, branding, retail, health care, psychology, equity, and history. BALCA has five key principles that hold our organization together and shape our work and vision: professional development, business ownership, civil rights, education, and culture. This platform grew organically from our experiences in the industry and the need to create a space for not only our voices but others with important perspectives on the ever-changing landscape of California cannabis.

In 2018 and 2019, Latinos/as within the cannabis industry met at potlucks, equity, and industry events at locations throughout the Bay Area to share stories of being culturally exploited by white-owned brands. Latinos play a vital role in cannabis from agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, retail budtenders and managers, brand ambassadors, and other crucial key positions in the cannabis business's daily operations. However, we did not see the representation of Latino/as in business ownership or respect for such work. We knew we had not only the need to generate a larger voice but groups of people ready and willing to share their stories.

BALCA launched our first English and Spanish cannabis newsletter in January 2021. It provided a platform for Latina/o budtenders, small equity people of color-owned cannabis businesses, legacy Humboldt farmers, people negatively affected by the War on Drugs, and others within the legal cannabis industry. We published six newsletters filled with unique accounts of history-making individuals.

Cindy De La Vega wrote a first-hand account of opening up her first dispensary in San Francisco, making her the first-ever Latina dispensary owner. Melina Baeza told her story of being a budtender with a business degree, giving quality retail analysis. Carlos Santana gave an exclusive interview on the cannabis shamanistic culture of the 1970s and how it inspired his cannabis brand, Mirayo. We interviewed Tucky Blunt,

the first equity dispensary owner in Oakland, an Afro-American cannabis leader who was once subjected to felony arrest for cannabis. One of our editors, Rebecca Olmos, shared her experience with the Spanish and English languages and how they tie into the art of budtending. Blue Reyes, another BALCA editor and seasoned cannabis professional, wrote a powerful testimonial about his experience navigating the cannabis industry. Javier Armas, a writer, and BALCA co-founder, explained the importance of budtender education and how it is key to a healthy cannabis industry.

These are just a few perspectives from the first six publications we gathered into an anthology. On July 23, 2022, we published our first book: *Connection through Cannabis, History, and Culture: A 2021 Bilingual Anthology of Cannabis Writings by the Bay Area Latino Cannabis Alliance*. It featured over 45 authors and 59 original essays and was sold at retailers and dispensaries throughout California and Mexico. BALCA held the launch party at Rose Mary Jane, a retail dispensary in Oakland focused on social equity and social justice. Not only did the event feature our book, but it also featured small cannabis brands and local businesses from throughout California with hundreds of people showing up and supporting our mission.

BALCA also has a department focused on Latin America run by our Latin American Director, Alvaro Portillo, an Oaksterdam graduate and professional cultivator, born in El Salvador. Alvaro has networked and interviewed amazing cannabis leaders in Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico. BALCA has held influential events in Oakland, San Jose, and San Francisco, that bring together both cannabis professionals and general cannabis-friendly people who are open to learning about our organization and vibe with our rich culture.

We work hard on giving Latino/as and other under-represented groups of people a safe space to share their experiences as well as provide them with cannabis literature translated into languages native to them, like Spanish, soon Portuguese, and hopefully more as we continue to develop our team and share our vision. Our literary mission is a reflection of cannabis, a plant that has transcended borders and continues to bring communities together—as the plant empowers us, we like to empower others. **HT**

—BALCA

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CA Protects Workers Who Smoke Off-the-Clock

On Sept. 18, California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed several bills including one that protects employees who consume cannabis on their own time. The laws are designed to “strengthen California’s cannabis laws, expand the legal cannabis market, and redress the harms of cannabis prohibition.” Assembly Bill 2188, led by Assemblymember Bill Quirk (D-Hayward), protects Californians from employment discrimination based on their use of cannabis off-the-clock and away from the workplace. “For too many Californians, the promise of cannabis legalization remains out of reach,” Gov. Newsom stated in the announcement. “These measures build on the important strides our state has made toward this goal, but much work remains to build an equitable, safe and sustainable legal cannabis industry. I look forward to partnering with the Legislature and policymakers to fully realize cannabis legalization in communities across California.” Earlier in September, Gov. Newsom signed two bills that will prevent medical cannabis patients from being discriminated against by physicians and surgeons for a positive THC test.

Read more at [HighTimes.com](https://www.hightimes.com)



Researchers Study Psilocybin as Treatment for Obesity

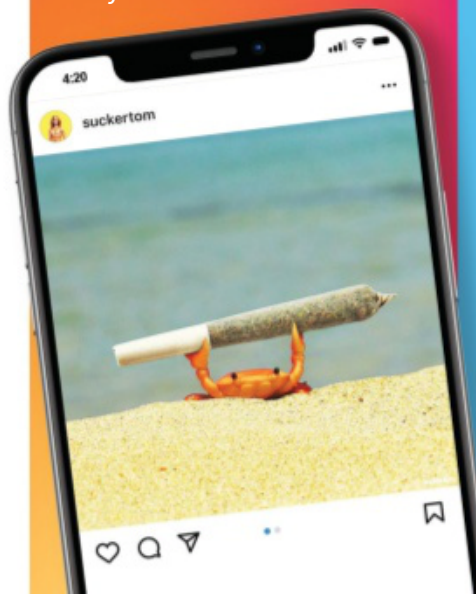
A new study published in *Translation Psychology* suggests a growing interest in using psilocybin to treat obesity. Danish researchers attempted to mirror and build upon previous research from the University of Oxford suggesting the compound is useful for the same purpose. Scientists associated with the University of Copenhagen in Denmark conducted an experiment with mice to determine the potential of psilocybin to reduce cravings for food. To conduct the study, the researchers used mouse models to examine genetic obesity, diet-induced obesity, and binge-eating disorder and investigate the effect of psilocybin on body weight as well as its impacts on food intake. Initial results show that a single high dose of psilocybin or a daily microdosing did not lead to a significant drop in body weight or less food intake among obese mice. While the new findings were inconclusive, researchers said that further research into psilocybin for this purpose is warranted, as they are currently limited to rodent models. Researchers suspect the compound may present different results in humans when further research is possible.

Read more at [HighTimes.com](https://www.hightimes.com)



On Instagram

Somehow, German content creator [@suckertom](#) found this diamond in the rough, featuring one happy crab. Photographer Clairpha managed to snap this original million-dollar shot of a crab holding a pre-roll high in the air, as if it were proud of this discovery. One commenter [@vanfan625](#) suggested that THC should stand for “The Happy Crab.” Crabs are known to occasionally pick up objects to either fight, or for a crab victory dance after defeating a rival, but being able to capture a crab holding a joint is another story. Chances are, this crab isn’t letting go of its new treasure any time soon.



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[@healyjforUC](#) After they relabel alcohol [for cancer risks], we’ll need a new label for cannabis: “Cannabis may prevent, slow progress of, and shrink most forms of cancer.”
[@HIGH_TIMES_Mag](#) [@NCIAorg](#)
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[@RevMadMann](#) [@HIGH_TIMES_Mag](#) Minnesota & Wisconsin should have followed Illinois when it comes to legalizing cannabis.

[@IceburghSlimm](#) [@HIGH_TIMES_Mag](#) [@sclabs_us](#) and [@benbot11](#) I love strains high in myrcene and limonene they are my go to terpenes.

[@BlazingIndo](#) [@Fast_Buds](#) [@Pot_portraits](#) and [@HIGH_TIMES_Mag](#) I’ve asked for some Mimosa Cake seeds as part of a prize I’ve won, looks like an amazing strain so I’m really excited about growing it out.

[@sammysegway524](#) When I was a young teenager I got this [@HIGH_TIMES_Mag](#) peel off calendar that had cool stoner facts every day including movie recs, music recs, celebrity stoner stories. I can’t believe they only did it once and didn’t keep it going. Wish I could find it.

[@JonGree10628880](#) [@HIGH_TIMES_Mag](#) and [@JoeBiden](#) We are trying to destroy the Russian economy and we’re actively providing weapons and intelligence support to get their military killed... I mean this just kind of sucks for Brittany Griner.



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GROWING TRENDS

Seven key points to success in legal cannabis cultivation.

CONTINUING A DOMINO EFFECT INCREASINGLY SEEN ACROSS THE UNITED STATES SINCE California legalized medical cannabis in 1996, the production of legal cannabis is poised to grow dramatically with the coming launches of newly adopted markets in the East Coast and Midwest. Between this year and 2030, programs starting in Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Virginia will collectively account for one-quarter of the legal cannabis produced in the country, underscoring the scale of opportunity emerging in

those states. Nationwide, legal cannabis demand is poised to explode, growing from a projected \$31 billion in sales by 2022's end to \$73 billion worth in 2030.

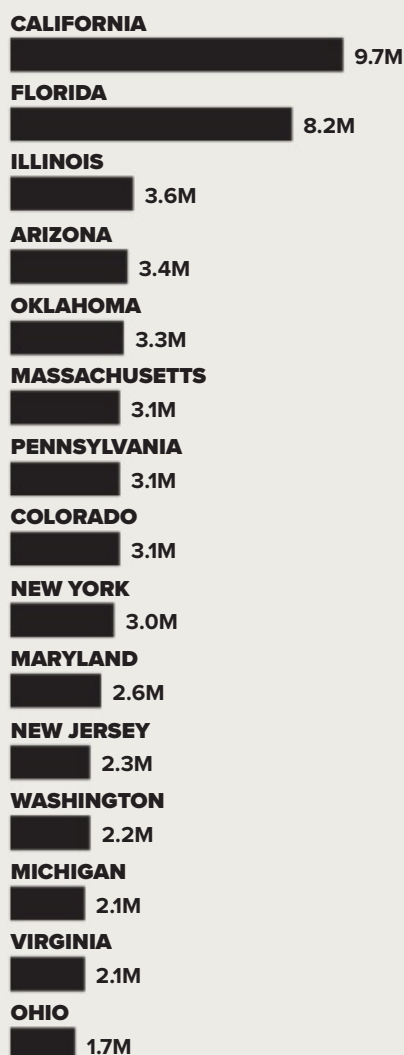
Pressing economic issues could also accelerate legislation ahead. Historians note how the 21st Amendment repealed national alcohol prohibition in 1933 during the Great Depression. Given how states are still coping with financial fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, government officials are feeling pressure to raise state revenues which could come from sales taxes on cannabis products. >>

“Nationwide, legal cannabis demand is poised to explode, growing from a projected \$31 billion in sales by 2022's end to \$73 billion worth in 2030.”

Top 15 legal cannabis production markets by facility type:

Projected Total Lbs. Produced 2022-2030

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As the activation of new markets in the legal cannabis industry transitions eastward from West Coast markets, several factors will impact how cannabis is grown. Such shifts are already forcing cannabis growers to rethink how to cultivate their plants. New York is projected to pace the fields, with its expected indoor cultivation producing 12 million pounds of cannabis by 2030, while California will continue to increase its outdoor and greenhouse production.

Cannabis growers will need to address the same issue threatening to disrupt the wine industry and other agriculture-based enterprises: new weather patterns brought on by climate change. Different climatic conditions will favor controlled environments over outdoor cultivation, given either the length and depth of winters in the North or summer humidity in the South.

Strained, aging electrical systems will make energy efficiency an even greater priority for growers reliant on the grid. Odor control will be imperative for producers in the country's most densely populated regions, and cost competitiveness will be critical for legal markets competing against those states' sophisticated

and highly efficient illicit markets.

Shorter growing cycles will precipitate a need for growers to get their plants from seed to sale before increasing risks of early freezes, fires, or floods. Conversely, some cannabis strains will prove themselves better suited for locales where they typically grow.

While flower remains the most highly demanded product form in the market, other cannabis-based products (including edibles, topicals, and vapes, etc.) account for half of all legal product sales.

In anticipation of a nearly 39% increase in harvested cannabis from 20 million pounds in 2020, to 27.7 million pounds in 2030, New Frontier Data (in partnership with Surna Cultivation Technologies) released a free report, *Growing Excellence: Seven Ways to Optimize Cannabis Cultivation in Newly Legal Markets*, examining the fundamental variables which producers must consider as they determine whether to build or upgrade facilities to serve the newly expanding markets.

By basing their strategic plans around seven key factors identified and detailed in the report, operators can capitalize on the massive market opportunity coming to bear. **HT**

LOCATION

Location significantly influences tradeoffs between indoor and greenhouse facilities.

AUTOMATION

Automation is changing the game, but also increases the imperative for having the right people managing the system.

BUILD OR BUY?

Buying a well-designed facility reduces the time to operationalization, but if the facility needs retrofitting of major systems, the advantage of buying declines. Four key variables to consider include cost, location, facility performance, and future expansion.

DEMAND FOR VALUE ADDS

As demand for value-added products surges, production will increasingly split between cultivation for smokable flower and for extraction.

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

Resource efficiency is an increasingly important competitive differentiator.

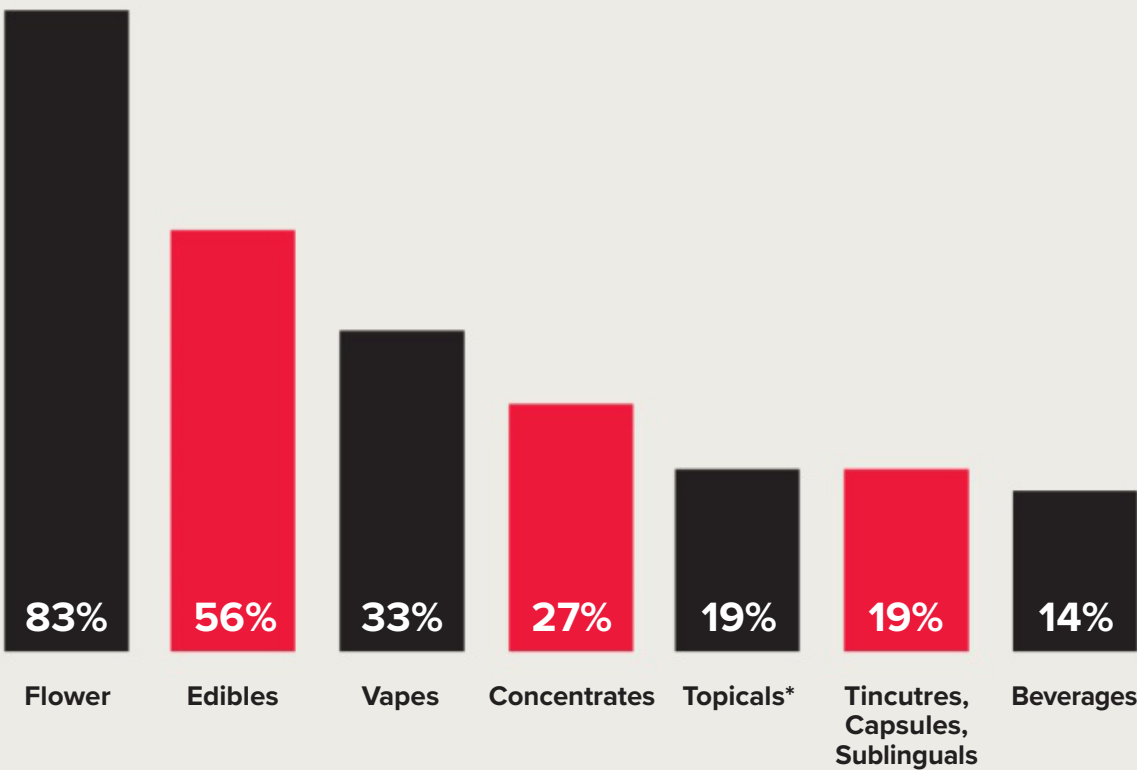
CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change will have increasingly consequential impacts on cultivation environments.

FUTURE PLANNING

Minimal shaking of a crystal ball foretells how federal legalization and reforms could drastically minimize the carbon impact of the burgeoning industry nationwide. Sungrown, greenhouse, or warehouse-cultivated cannabis from the West Coast could supply consumer demand from coast to coast, much like the way that California farmers supply 90% of U.S. demand for strawberries and tomatoes. Meanwhile, geographical differences may spur interest in differentiated craft and regionally produced products.

Top forms: What % of current consumers use each form



Note: *Topicals include transdermal patches. Among current (annual+) consumers.

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PROFESSIONAL ACTIVIST

Amy Case King has helped guide international cannabis policy and education.

WHAT AN INCREDIBLE YEAR FOR VETERANS, CANNABIS, AND activism. In this issue, I have the honor and privilege of writing about one of our industry's hardest working veterans, cannabis activist Amy Case King.

I first met Case King seven years ago while we were both attending the annual Americans for Safe Access Conference. I had the privilege of walking the halls of Congress with her

during my very first trip to Washington, D.C. As a young activist, walking those halls was intimidating and frightening, but having Case King by my side was an incredible learning experience. Case King is as confident and assuring as they come.

Case King was born in Dallas, Texas, but currently resides in Yucatán, Mexico. She began her advocacy journey over 15 years ago to help her uncle, a Vietnam veteran who suffered from alcoholism, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and many other conditions. Since then, Case King has remained passionate about educating others on the medical uses of cannabis.

For over a decade, Case King has attended countless cannabis conferences around the world. Every time I check in with her it seems as though she always has plans to check out the latest conference. Today, Case King spends most of her time working with the Veterans Action Council (VAC), where she is a proud and very hardworking councilmember.

I don't know a single activist that has been to more cannabis conferences than yourself. Which conference would you say is the most beneficial or interesting?

For me personally, it has been the MJBizCon conference in Las Vegas. It offers a vast amount of networking opportunities before, during, and after the expo has closed. The venue is super large, over 320,000 [square feet], over 1,000 vendors, and literally hundreds of speakers, so any topic of interest can be found. It's a great place to find out about new trends in the industry as well.

You just returned from a cannabis conference in Washington D.C. Can you tell us what you saw there?

My attendance in Washington D.C. this past week was strictly a veteran's lobbying event. This was an event put together by the [VAC]. We were hosted by NCIA but did all our own work to get appointments with key leaders who sit on the veterans or armed forces committee inside both the House and Senate. The U.S. is a red-hot mess on its approach to cannabis policy. The best hope we have presently is a bill brought by Rep. Nancy Mace (South Carolina) called the States Reform Act.

You have put in a lot of work at the United Nations as well. What kind of work have you done in your high-level cannabis activism?

I became hooked on working at the United Nation's level of drug policy from the first time when I attended the UNGASS (United Nations General Assembly Special Session) at the U.N. in NYC 2016. It was actually happening on 4/20. This was supposed to be a "science evidence-based drug policy event," or so I thought. I wore my "alcohol is safer than marijuana" shirt. While walking the halls to get to an event I was stopped by someone in authority and told that I was not allowed to wear my shirt, [because] it was "an item of protest." I protested that it was not an item of protest, it was in fact science-based evidence. I lost that battle and refused to turn the shirt inside out and was made to leave the building. I have been watchdogging drug policy at the highest level since then.

This meant I attended the World Health Organization's first-ever cannabis scientific review. I gave testimony and even took a

cannabis plant into the meeting while sitting directly in front of the director of the International Narcotics Bureau. I have given intervention to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *After UNGASS: the Way Forward for U.N. Drug Strategies*. I have participated in the last six sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs where all drug policy related to the existing drug treaties happens. The work at the United Nations, coupled with the recommendations from the WHO, prompted the collaborative project *Linking Cannabis and Hemp Policies to Sustainable Development and Human Rights*, which led to the first-ever Cannabis Sustainability Conference. We still have countries in which cannabis possession over certain amounts (200 grams) will illicit the death penalty. The work at the international level may never be finished.

In the U.S., cannabis is still a Schedule I substance along with heroin, and one schedule above cocaine. Why do you think that U.S. agencies like the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration still keep cannabis at that schedule?

The DEA is one of the organizations I spoke of earlier that see cannabis as an easy target money maker. Clearly, the U.S. government is at odds with itself, where on one hand the HHS (Health and Human Services) holds a patent citing cannabinoids have medical utility (patent #6630507) while continuing to hold cannabis in Schedule I which infers no medical utility. There is no reason to view an entity that continues to perpetuate lies and deceit, destroying good people's lives as relevant. The absolute power of the drug war corrupts absolutely.

Do you believe that you will see the end of cannabis prohibition in your lifetime?

On one hand, I want to say yes but the realist in me says we are only seeing the beginning of what prohibition 2.0 has in store for us. Cannabis infractions have been a money maker for a long time, it isn't comfortable for the powers that be to give that up so easily. The new trend is to give people a false sense of legalization while writing laws inside legalization that still have criminal penalties. Case in point, Virginia, adult legal, home cultivation is allowed but the moment you make cannabis utter you have committed a felony offense, that equals prohibition 2.0. 

"We still have countries in which cannabis possession over certain amounts (200 grams) will illicit the death penalty."

- Amy Case King

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MARKET ANALYSIS

The final THMQ for 2022 brings with it a holiday gift of less expensive ganja, as the calendar year ends with the average American ounce of cannabis costing only **\$288**. This significant price drop was aided by a **\$14** decline in the Southern market to **\$268**, and a **\$18** decrease in the West to **\$287**. Only the East experienced a price hike, as an ounce in that market rose **\$8** to **\$309**. The year's last "Top 5" was populated with familiar favorites like GG4 and Blue Dream—with one notable exception, as the complex Hash Burger strain makes its first-ever appearance on our monthly rankings.

TOP 5 STRAINS

1	GG4	4 @ \$266
2	Wedding Cake	2 @ \$395
3	Runtz	2 @ \$380
4	Blue Dream	2 @ \$286
5	Hash Burger	2 @ \$273

WINNERS



↑ Innovative Industrial Properties Inc.	NYSE: IIPR	\$92.12 (+2.33)
↑ Abbvie Inc.	NYSE: ABBV	\$140.52 (+1.81)
↑ Altria Group Inc.	NYSE: MO	\$45.15 (+0.20)
↑ Cronos Group Inc.	NAS: CRON	\$3.06 (+0.10)
↑ Canopy Growth Corp	NAS: CGC	\$3.51 (+0.10)

LOSERS



↓ Jazz Pharma PLC	NAS: JAZZ	\$151.55 (-0.45)
↓ Constellation Brands Inc.	NYSE: STZ	\$248.24 (-0.15)
↓ WM Technology Inc.	NAS: MAPS	\$2.37 (-0.08)
↓ Cara Therapeutics Inc.	NAS: CARA	\$10.89 (-0.07)
↓ Village Farms Intl Inc.	NAS: VFF	\$2.50 (-0.02)

HIGHEST 10 STATES

PENNSYLVANIA	\$480
<i>Runtz</i>	
COLORADO	\$473
<i>Ice Cream Man</i>	
RHODE ISLAND	\$471
<i>Grateful Breath</i>	
OHIO	\$469
<i>Wedding Cake</i>	
WEST VIRGINIA	\$400
<i>Domina</i>	
SOUTH CAROLINA	\$400
<i>GG4</i>	
UTAH	\$400
<i>Sherb Crasher #6</i>	
CALIFORNIA	\$400
<i>Bubba's Girl</i>	
LOUISIANA	\$392
<i>Tangie</i>	
NEW JERSEY	\$388
<i>Animal Face</i>	

LOWEST 10 STATES

INDIANA	\$81
<i>Bubba Kush</i>	
OKLAHOMA	\$83
<i>Wook Stomper</i>	
NEW YORK	\$160
<i>Gelato</i>	
TEXAS	\$168
<i>GG4</i>	
NEVADA	\$177
<i>GG4</i>	
WISCONSIN	\$180
<i>Critical Mass</i>	
WASHINGTON	\$192
<i>Kush Mints</i>	
OREGON	\$200
<i>Hash Burger</i>	
MICHIGAN	\$204
<i>Grogg</i>	
MISSOURI	\$214
<i>Ghost in the Machine</i>	



***Products Designed
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HUMILITY OVER HYPE

Sense cannabis lets the flowers speak for themselves.

by Ellen Holland

WITHIN THE SENSE GROW ROOM, CULTIVATION MANAGER ROB King slides up along the wall in order not to brush up against the buds. It's a tight space and reminds me of cultivation facilities I visited before California's transition to the adult-use marketplace in 2018. That's not coincidental. This grow, centrally located downtown in one of the most expensive cities in the U.S., San Francisco, was one of the first in California to be city-licensed for cannabis cultivation back in the Proposition 215 era. With a room for plants in veg and two flowering rooms with around 100 lights, the team at Sense has the opportunity to be hands-on with each plant they grow. And this attention to detail shows in the flowers they produce, which are consistently some of the most frosted over, absolutely crystal-coated dank nuggets out there.

"Because of how long it's been in operation, this was never an ideal grow space," King says upon my arrival. "Like you see a lot of these new ventures that are funded and backed in like super pristine lab-type grows and this is really not that. This has a lot of history to it. It's not an ideal space. We're in San Francisco, so cost per square foot is at a premium."

I easily arrived at the grow via public transit on a weekday afternoon and, along with King, meet the company's CEO Steve Griffith and COO Adam Hayes



in a small hallway area. The group seems close and I later find out they've all recently had children within the last nine months. Hayes and King were even at the hospital together at the same time. When I ask if they'd ever consider moving out of San Francisco they all agree it's easier and less expensive just to stay put. Plus, they enjoy working in the city where, before they all had kids, they'd sometimes go out for drinks together after work. In fact, they have plans to expand their current space.

Griffith explains that Sense is a "bootstrap wonder company."

"We pride ourselves on being the least corporate company you can get," he says. "We are as small batch as it gets. We've got about 100 lights. We're just under a 2,000-square-foot canopy. We are in the garden every day... we're grinders. As far as comparing us to the hype machine kind of companies, we're the antithesis of that." >>

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DRINK COLD

FLOWERS OVER EVERYTHING

●●●

With minimal marketing efforts and without a large social media presence, Sense's flowers are what makes them stand out. Their Pink Certz win at the Transbay Challenge III, a cannabis competition hosted by Jimi Devine in March 2022, put the eyes of the weed world on them before they took first place in the hybrid category with the same strain at the *High Times* Cannabis Cup SoCal: People's Choice Edition in summer 2022.

Like many sought-after companies in the cannabis space, the team pops seeds and conducts phenohunts to select which cultivars to offer. When we meet, they are planning a run of testing new genetics with about six cultivars grown out into 10 different selections of each to discover which one is best. Today they have Purple Churro, a cross of Cinnamon Horchata and Apples & Bananas from Compound Genetics, and an unexpected older classic, Headband, among the contenders. Their choices have produced great results in the past, as shown by their competition wins with Pink Certz, a cross of Grape Gasoline with The Menthol created by Compound Genetics.

▼ SENSE CEO STEVE GRIFFITH TENDS TO THE PLANTS.



“We pride ourselves on being the least corporate company you can get. We are as small batch as it gets.”

- Steve Griffith



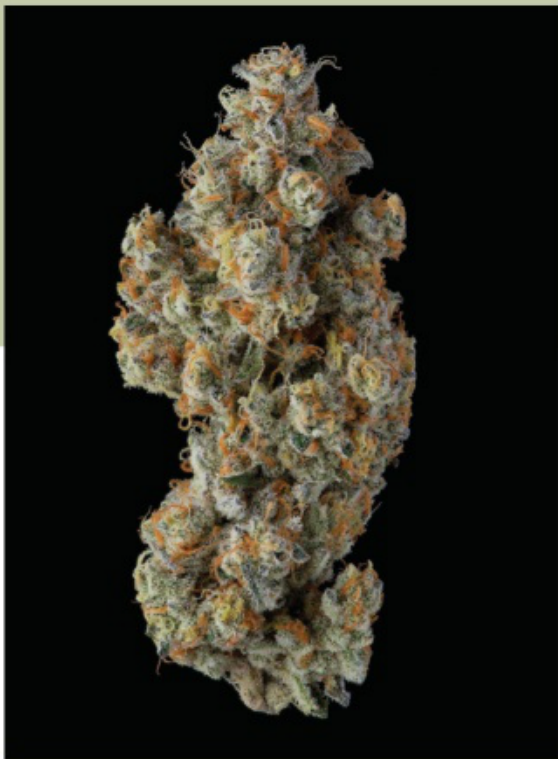
▲ SENSE COO ADAM HAYES SHOWS OFF A HEALTHY FAN LEAF.

“That was kind of a kismet kind of situation when we went to the Transbay Challenge,” Griffith says. “We didn’t know [Compound Genetics]. We just bought their seeds. We’ve been buying their seeds for a couple years now and we happened to enter the same strain that they brought. They were selling those Pink Certz seeds at the event and we kind of came together and showed them a jar and they were pretty wowed by it and we ended up winning.”

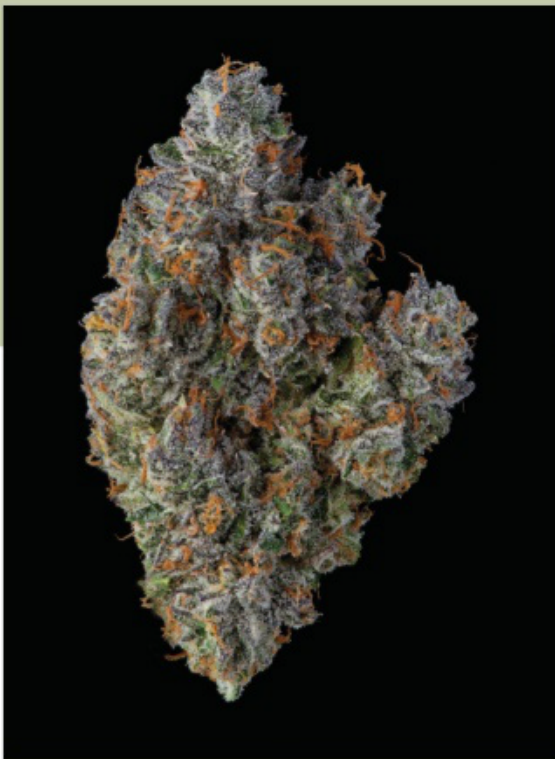
So what does it take to know you might be growing award-winning cannabis?

“You have to look at things through a pretty wide scope at first,” Griffith says. “So obviously, the first thing we want to look for is bag appeal, aroma, flavor.”

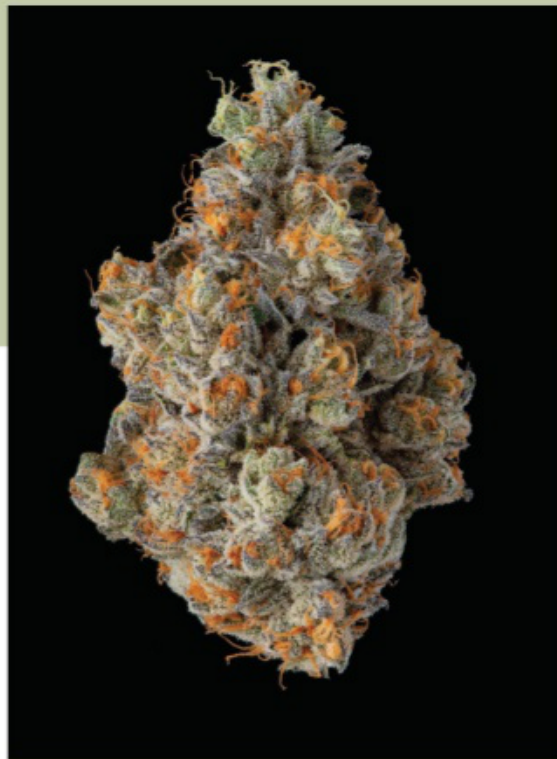
That hits three of the five senses: sight, smell, and taste. But even with all that, the ultimate decision maker is still the amount of THC. Griffith explains that if a strain tests lower than 20% THC, it’s “just not doable in today’s market.”



▲ PLATINUM KUSH BREATH



▲ GEORGIA APPLE PIE



▲ MARSHMALLOW OG

SENSE'S GROWING STYLE

●●●

Within the veg room at Sense, the plants really feel like they are vibing. A vibrant shade of lime green, they all look happy and pretty uniform. The clones are grown in rockwool and are on a drip irrigation system. The advantage of rockwool, King explains, comes in the labor savings. Before adopting this method, they would have to take the time to transplant the clones into gallon pots.

“[Rockwool] is a completely inert media,” King says. “There’s no cation exchange capacity (a measure of soil’s ability to supply nutrients), so whatever you’ve feeding it, it’s very quickly and

directly responding to.”

While some cultivators will continue to grow their rockwool clones hydroponically by transferring them into larger rockwool blocks or slabs, Sense places them in a different medium mix with carbon, coco coir, and peat and then adds worm castings, mycorrhizal fungi, and beneficial insects.

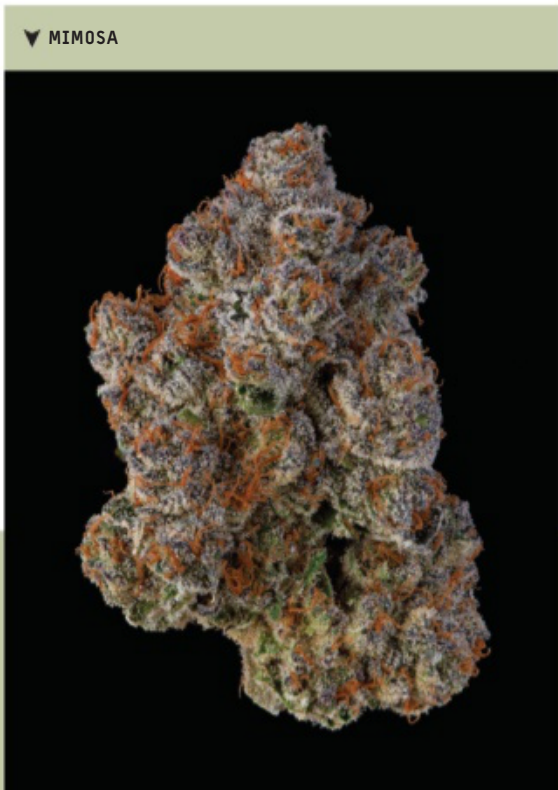
“I would never say we’re [doing] living soil because the guys who are doing living soil are doing something even beyond what we’re trying to do,” King says. “But we are trying to allow room for that biology, and I think allowing room for that biology really sets our quality apart.”

Griffith expands on that idea when it comes to the nutrients they feed their plants.

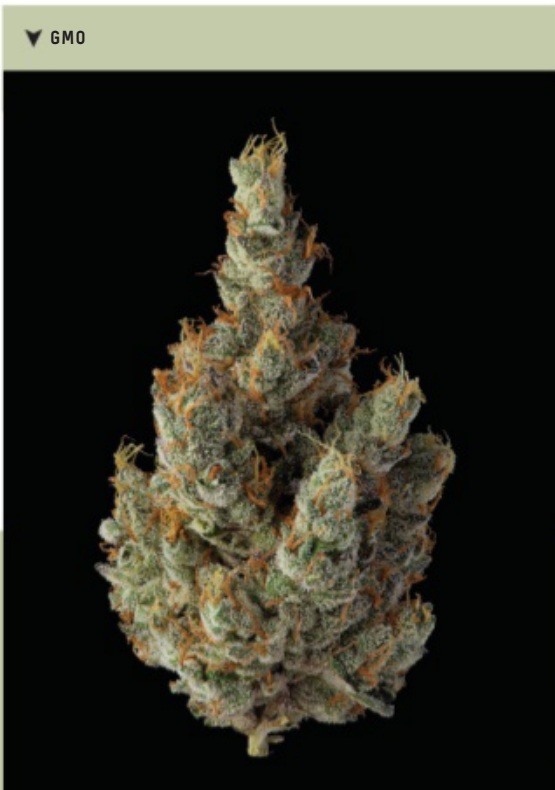
“[Our growing style] allows flavors and aromas to come out in the flower that you don’t get when you’re doing the full synthetic. So we feed synthetic nutrients, but we also are adding this proprietary blend we created of kelp, humic acid, fulvic acid, fish hydrolysate, and a few other things to help create some biology in the retail [market],” he says.

And while indoor cannabis has a reputation for not being environmentally friendly, all the power it takes to run the Sense grow has always been generated by renewable energy thanks to San Francisco’s CleanPowerSF program.

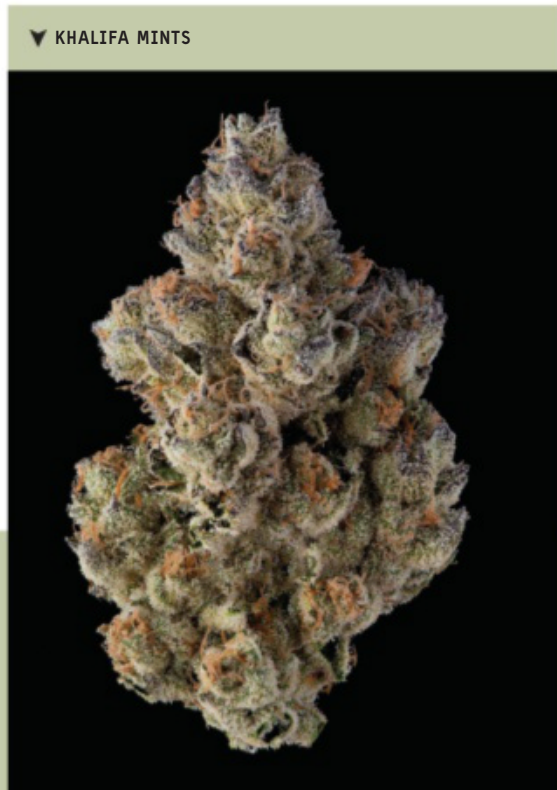
“It’s a bit of a premium on our power, but you sleep a little better at night,” Griffith says. >>



▼ MIMOSA



▼ GMO



▼ KHALIFA MINTS



MARSHMALLOW OG

THE SENSE SELECTIONS

●●●

While they aren't about making too much noise, Sense is growing some of today's most popular and sought-after cultivars. That includes GMO, a Girl Scout Cookies and Chemdawg cross that looks like a real monster in the grow room because thin branches jut out of gnarled colas as the plant continues to stretch for the light.

"It's god-awful looking," Griffith says. "Look at the plants. It's like, 'What's going on?' But when it's all said and done, it's one of the most potent and smelling strains even without us growing it, just period."

Alongside that dank offering, Sense is growing the decidedly sweeter and creamier Rainbow Chip, a Sunset Sherbet and Mint Chocolate Chip cross from Exotic Genetix. There's also Khalifa Mints. This one comes from Compound Genetics's collaboration

with Wiz Khalifa's cannabis company, Khalifa Kush, and has one of the same parents as Pink Certz, The Menthol, combined with Khalifa Kush. My sample smells like a mojito, with muddled mint and fresh lime citrus, and reveals its gassy aroma when ground. The whole eighth is impressively staked in four buds, which are completely frosted with trichomes. Still, while Griffith hones in on Khalifa Mints as a cultivar with growth potential, pointing out the popularity of Khalifa Kush, the team reassures me the hype does not drive them.

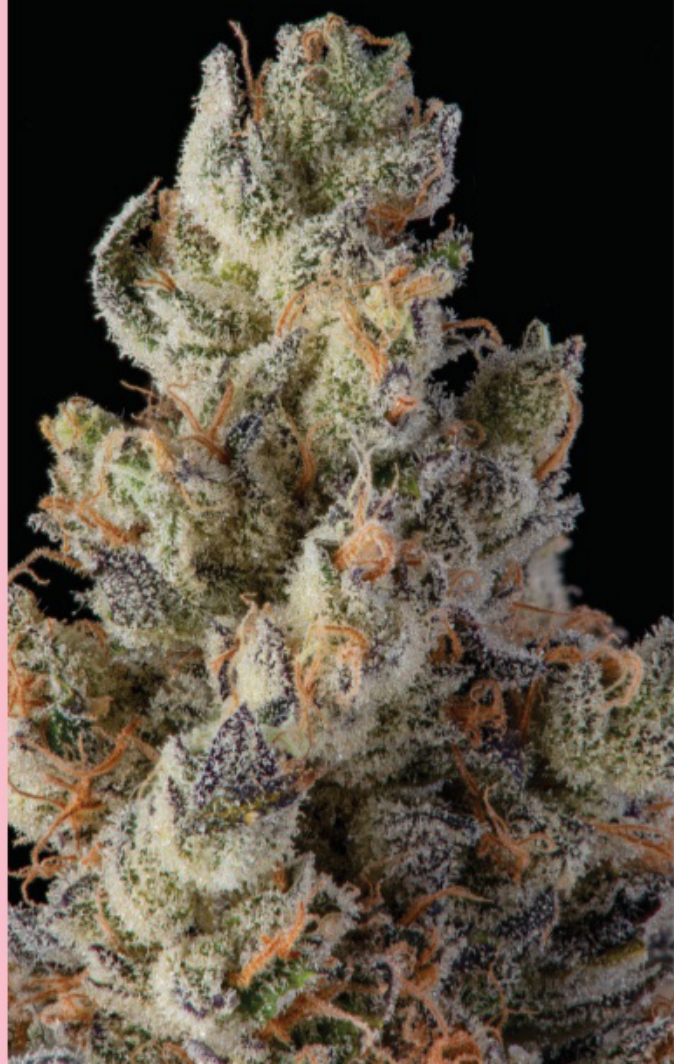
"We've entered a lot of things and we're pretty humble with all our thoughts on our strains," Hayes says. "Pink Certz kind of came to us as a surprise and we've been riding that a little bit, but we're not the ones to be like, 'This one is going to be the best.'" **HT**

 sensegrown.com

SENSE-SATIONAL! PINK CERTZ COMBINES FRUIT AND GAS.

by Ngaio Bealum

I first smoked Sense's Pink Certz at the Transbay Challenge in early 2022. It was tasty, smooth, well cured, had a really nice buzz, and won first place. A few months later, *High Times* gave me a jar and asked for a review. Hell yes, I thought to myself: A chance to see if the retail release was as good as the competition cut? Indeed. Let's get into it.



FIRST THINGS FIRST:

This cut is gorgeous. It is covered, and I mean COVERED, in trichomes. Sort of an army drab green with dark purple highlights and short red hairs, it definitely passes the eye test. One of the things that stood out to me was the way the nugs in my jar were obviously and lovingly hand-trimmed. No larf, no weird shapes, just a good example of craft and care. A good trim job is like sushi rice—you may not notice it if it is just OK, but when it's done well, it makes everything taste better. Remember: You eat (and smoke) with your eyes first.

SMELL:

There's a lot going on, and it's all flowers and subtlety. Opening the jar and breaking the seal releases an aroma of "good weed," if you know what I mean. Nothing super-specific, but it smells good. A deeper whiff reveals complexities: A hint of lavender, a wisp of lemon, or maybe a soupçon of cherry candy. The aroma is not intoxicating, but it is appetizing.

FLAVOR:

Wait. Let me take another hit to refresh my memory. Ah. There it is. Fruity, with tropical and orange notes up front. Smooth cure, big hits, no cough. Nice. The surprise flavor is Gas with a capital G. The exhale is all diesel and

menthol, with a friendly, pleasant, and slightly greasy mouth feel. Mmmmm. Yes. I'm gonna take another hit to confirm my findings. Yes. I was correct. Oranges up front, diesel in the back. Fruitgas.

EFFECTS:

I'm high. Did I mention how sticky this weed is? Trust me, it's sticky. I bet it makes great rosin. Feels great. Where was I? Ah yes. Not a goofy high, but a fun mellow buzz. I feel like I could concentrate on stuff if I wanted. Or I could just sit here and zone out. Or wash the dishes. Or not. What I really want to do is browse around a good used book and record store and walk through a cool neighborhood. And now I have the munchies. So yeah, this high is great for urban exploration or deep concentration, whichever you prefer.

It's hard to find quality cannabis these days. In California, replacing "deli style" cannabis dispensaries with the prepackaged sales model makes it almost impossible for a diligent consumer to "follow their nose" to a good strain. You have to trust a brand, but brands can be incredibly inconsistent. From what I've tried, I can say that Sense is doing a great job of producing consistently high-quality cannabis. **HT**

THE BEST STRAINS OF 2022

**THE POTENT,
TERPY FLOWERS
YOU'RE GOING
TO WANT TO GET
TO KNOW.**

By Jimi Devine

I've been tasked by our fearless leader Ellen Holland with writing the *High Times* State of the Heat address for 2022, a celebration of the flame and all things chronic.

Make no mistake about it, 2022 was a good year for the heat. The perils of the ever-expanding cannabis market have forced legacy producers to put their best foot forward or join others in cannabis history if they haven't already been ruined by the marketplace or the perils of licensing.

To an extent, the quality of product on the legal marketplace in California was one of the bright spots nationally for cannabis as other places like Michigan, Maine, and Oklahoma held their own more than ever. As you make your way east from the coast of The Emerald Triangle in Northern California the numbers start to creep up from the lowest prices even the best cultivators have ever seen.

There are only so many rappers to go around that can afford those \$4,000 pounds. These days, many killers are getting half that if they're lucky.

But with that West Coast price crash it's been extra lucrative to move product direct to the East Coast where things are going off at the moment. This has led to a wild shift in the heat per capita making it east. Sure, there have always been elite weed boxes heading in that direction, but there is more of the best of it, now more than ever. Longtime California cultivators are stretched thin as they await the dawning of the new era in weed. What was once head stash quality is now the first thing to sell as folks struggle to make a living.

But from these shifting times, the heat shined through the fog again in 2022. We believe these strains were keystones in the arches that held up the hype this year, each one important in its own right with its place in history.

Here are our favorite strains of 2022: >>



BY BLUEPRINT



TRIPLE LINDY (BLUEPRINT)

Since arguably the biggest launch of 2021 last summer, the team at Blueprint has lived up to the hype at every step. Be it the winter Zalympix or Hall of Flowers, wherever you ran into Blueprint their cannabis was sure to be a barometer for the heat in the room. If it wasn't the most excellent jar you'd see, which it was plenty of the time, it was right there at the top of the pack.

Adding to the fun: a grower wildly respected in the right circles and a dash of secrecy. The Blueprint team is constantly hunting for their next hit with just over 140 new phenos dropping every two months from their dedicated propagation setup, and we know the winners are heat as their trophy shelf has proven. They just don't tell us much else about these magical strains!

Jordan Aguilar, Blueprint's co-founder and director of indoor cultivation, sat down to talk about the major successes the company has seen in its initial 14 months of operation. It was easy for onlookers to note a blistering start by any standards.

"I mean, honestly, last year just flew by and we're just staying focused on what we're doing," Aguilar told *High*

Times. "It's unfortunate for people who are struggling. The market is in its infancy stage and figuring stuff out. But as far as us? We're just so thankful for the community and the opportunity to show the world our craft."

We asked Aguilar how much pressure there is to keep the rocket fueled with new elite strains. He laughed, comparing it to the performing arts when someone just expects a musician to drop a new hit song.

"What, I got to come up with another one?" he said with a laugh. "I just don't feel any pressure. Because we're in the same boat as anybody. Got to get seeds, you got to make seeds, you got to pop the seeds and you got to work. And at the end of the day, put enough time, effort, and energy towards a focused goal that will yield something beautiful."

Aguilar went into how the Triple Lindy came to be during its initial selection about four months before Blueprint launched in the summer of 2021.

"It was week three in flower. It was like day two. I was just going around trying to check the nose on the plants and smell that one," Aguilar said. "I just smiled so big."

They had a true standout and crossed their fingers it would hold up, it did. The flower checked every box you could ask for when it came to uniqueness, flavor, and impact.

Blueprint plans to build even further in 2023 on the strong base of enthusiasm in the community from its first year in operation. While they focused on growing the best cannabis possible, the brand still had to find its footing in year one.

"We didn't know who we were when we started," Aguilar said. "We've kind of fallen into these characters and we're kind of maturing into the brand. So I think we've laid a good foundation and now it's time to keep working on that foundation as well as build upon it." >>



▶ **ZOAP****(DEEP EAST/WIZARD TREES)**

Over the last two years, few things have mattered more to elite cannabis than the work of Deep East Oakland (DEO) Farms on its Rainbow Sherbert (RS) line and its various famous pheno numbers like RS-11, Studio 54, and the star of the pack, Zoap.

The RS line dates back to 16 packs of OZ Kush seeds DEO bought at the Emerald Cup in the mid-2010s, the last time Dying Breed took part was in 2017. So that's a testament to years of work in Oakland before the RS line took off. DEO found a bunch of killer phenos. Including a prize Z heavy male.

He F2ed the OZ Kush. It was named Pink Guava and had its own little hype wave in Oakland but nothing compared to its offspring. DEO would conduct an open pollination with the Pink Guava male on six other strains, among them his favorite Sunset Sherbert phenotype he'd ever come across known as the Black Sherb due to its darker than average color.

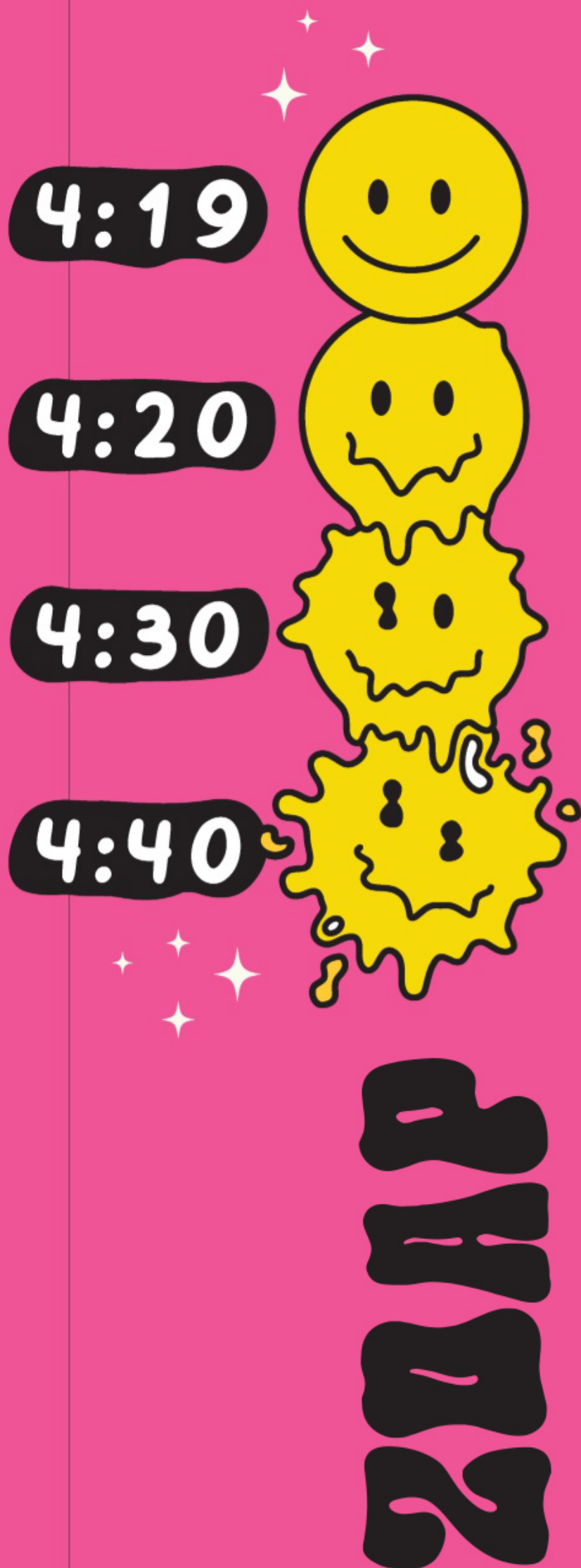
He would then share the seed stock from the OZ Kush x Pink Guava with Wizard Trees. DEO popped 120 of those seeds and found the #7, #16, #18, and #40. Wizard Trees found the #11 and #54 from the additional 100 he popped. We're all still riding on the resulting hype wave but some would argue the Rainbow Sherbert #16 F2 #21, now famously known as Zoap, took things to a whole new level.

While those dessert and Z terps have been on the streets for well over a year, it very much invited only as Zoap's commercial production scaled up to allow its conquest of 2022 full steam. DEO licensed the cut to Wizard Trees in 2021. Eventually, Zoap won the Zalympix Championships in Los Angeles after placing second in the Zalympix prior. It was arguably the most competitive cannabis contest series ever with as big of a feather as there was to go in any cap in 2022.

One cool thing about the build-up to Zoap's prominence is it gave the DEO team more time to work the line. Zoap ended up serving as the backbone female for the RS F3 line. Much of that was debuted as part of DEO's Black Box drop this past summer.

Regardless of where it goes from here, it's hard to point to anyone that had a bigger impact on the exotic cannabis community over the last 24 months than DEO Farms, and Zoap is the flagship of that impact. >>

BY DEEP EAST / WIZARD TREES







PINK CERTZ

(COMPOUND GENETICS/SENSE)

It's fair to say Pink Certz was a bit of a dark horse from Compound Genetics going into 2022. Strains like Jokerz, Red Bullz, Apples & Bananas, and Pave were capturing a lot of the spotlight, all deserving heat in their own right. Nevertheless, it may be fair to say Compound's pairing of Grape Gas and The Menthol had one of the biggest 2022s of the pack.

Why? Pink Certz would break into Compound's most elite ranks with a victory at The Transbay Challenge III in San Francisco. Our own Jon Cappetta and Ellen Holland were among the judges that day as Pink Certz took down some of the biggest names in California cannabis to come out as the top dog.

When we asked the team at Sense how many seeds they had to dive through to find their magic pheno loaded with grape and fuel notes, CEO Steve Griffith replied with a laugh.

"We got one pack, so it was 13 seeds," Griffith said. "We were pheno hunting toward the end of 2021. And it's actually funny because we weren't initially... it was kind of one of those strains that we weren't even sure we were going to keep it."

It was a bit of a finicky grower, but so is a lot of heat. The Sense team wasn't going to let that stop them

from providing the galaxy with new and exotic terps.

"Frankly when we went to go into the Transbay we had such a hard time deciding because we trimmed up what we wanted to enter and then we're like, 'Oh, let's check out some of these Pink Certz and put the jars side by side,'" Griffith said of Pink Certz winning the head-to-head battle with Sense's other potential entry. "We literally showed up to the event with both jars in hand and in the final minutes were just like fuck it. We're gonna drop it."

So why did Griffith go with that phenotype in the first place? He loves grape candy. He thinks their pheno of Pink Certz has heavier grape terps than any version of its Grape Gas parent. But there are certainly still plenty of fuel notes.

One of the things that helped contribute to Pink Certz hype levels in 2022 is there isn't that much to go around. Sense is a small batch grower and only produces about 100 pounds of it every month. The process of getting your hands on it has only added to the mystique.

Much of the time the cuts people find from Compound gear are measured against what they have in the house from their hunts at Node Labs or with cultivation partners. With most of their biggest hitters they found the best version. I think it's fair to say in the case of Pink Certz, Sense took top honors. »





PERMANENT MARKER



PERMANENT MARKER

(SEED JUNKY / DOJA PAK)

Doja Pak had one of the biggest 2022s of anyone with their much-hyped weekly event series and the weed to match. And don't get mad Hindenburg fans, but we think calling the Permanent Marker the biggest Doja strain of 2022 is a fair call.

Doja Pak's founder Ryan Bartholomew said it all started with a run-in with J Beezy from Seed Junky Genetics at the Emerald Cup last year. The pair had chatted prior but hit off on the in-person meeting. Bartholomew was invited to the Seed Junky facility on his next trip to L.A. not long after. Bartholomew was given the opportunity to build out a menu for Doja Pak bred and cultivated by Seed Junky.

Early on Bartholomew would lay eyes in on the Permanent Marker. It would be the first official strain to hit the new Seed Junky-curated part of the Doja Pak menu. Bartholomew would start by teasing the strain in New York for this year's epic 4/20 festivities. From there he would only add to the hype by kicking off Doja Pak's Thursday Night Hollywood Strain Premieres with Permanent Marker.

So what's driving all the enthusiasm? Good genetics. Permanent Marker is (Biscotti S1 x Sherb Bx) x (Gelato #41 x Sherb Bx) F2.

"I was able to go into his facility and pick ones that, for instance, with Permanent Marker," Bartholomew said. "The first thing I did when I smelled it was say, 'Wow! This kind of reminds me of Zoap.'"

We knew it was something his following would mess with. He brought it back to the rest of the Doja team and they concurred. At that point it was still called HH 1.5.

"The guys that I'm around every day, I kind of consider their consensus to be probably the most accurate in the world for our marketing, for what we do," Bartholomew said.

Once the Seed Junky team had an idea of what Doja Pak was looking for they started doing a bunch of work with the Permanent Marker. It's already been paired with a bunch of Seed Junky's best gear.

"He has the male brother of the Permanent Marker crossed to the G #41 x Animal Mints. The male brother of the Permanent Marker cross to his Orange Pushpop. So it's like basically once we started he dialed in what I like in the profiles and now it's easy for him to select," Bartholomew said.

In the course of the Hollywood strain premieres, they went through five pounds of sample phenos getting feedback on all of the selections. Keep an eye for more Permanent Marker phenos in the future. >>

BY SEED JUNKY / DOJA PAK



BY BACKPACK BOYZ

LEMON CHERRY GELATO

(BACKPACK BOYZ)

Lemon Cherry Gelato is the oldest pick on the list. It was a very protected cut for its first few years in existence. Eventually, it got out there a bit more and is now a coveted cut for any nursery to be in possession of. But it all traces to the Backpack Boyz.

"Lemon Cherry Gelato came from a bag seed out of a Gelato #33 Connected pack in 2016," Backpack Boyz Founder Juan Quesada told *High Times*. "That was the hottest shit at the time in 2016, 2017, was those black bags."

It took a couple of years for everything to get pumped up to full production, but by 2018 they were really getting it out there.

"That was when I finally got it underneath about 50 lights and started getting a little something going with it," Quesada said.

Quesada had found other seeds

in other packs. None ever panned out like the Lemon Cherry Gelato.

Quesada emphasized that part of the mystique, regardless of how many lights he had going at that point, was just that it was something new. In a marketplace that's seeing a lot of its cannabis come from the Gelato family tree, it still stood out in that pack.

Quesada also argues that branding helped. When the Lemon Cherry Gelato first dropped, he doesn't feel like a lot of people were going as loud as the Backpack Boyz were. At that time there was usually a jar involved when you were describing what top-shelf cannabis looked like.

We asked Quesada when he knew he was onto something special with the Lemon Cherry Gelato. He quickly replied that the first drop at Cookies Melrose changed everything.

"It literally was like overnight," Quesada said. "The next day a bunch of people were hitting me up about it and knew about it that I would have never thought knew about it. Like I was getting tagged by artists. This was still at the time we still had a Backpack Boyz Instagram page."

From there it just kind of spread like wildfire.

Now six years removed from when the seed was first popped, 2022 was the year Lemon Cherry Gelato entered a new level of folklore. Now it'll be forever among those strains that had must-grow years like OG Kush, Blue Dream, or Ice Cream Cake. And of course, that's not a knock on Lemon Cherry Gelato, that's just a result of the hype so far. **HT**





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BEST OF 2022

TOP PEOPLE'S CHOICE PRODUCTS

By Mike Adams

With the pandemic shifting our lives away from in-person events, *High Times* changed the format of the Cannabis Cup. No longer judged by high-profile people in cannabis only, the People's Choice competition opened the judging to, well, the people. Here's a look at some of the unique products that the judges felt were deserving of acclaim. >>



CONCENTRATES



There's a reason the cannabis concentrate market is one of the fastest growing sectors of the industry today, poised to rake in a whopping \$18.5 billion by 2030. It's great stuff! The mad scientists of the pro-stoner scene keep blowing our minds with the pot proficiency it takes to bring to life such clean burning, mule-kicking buzzes that soon, at least we're inclined to believe, will require the average user to wear a helmet and carry liability insurance. The People's Choice Awards saw a lot of amazing concentrate entries this year. High Level Health's Blue Skunk live budder is sweet and fruity, pulling from the strain's lineage of DJ Short's Blueberry and Skunk #1. Hell,

it's one of Colorado's most awarded solvent concentrates, so why it is a fan favorite is no secret. Element x Pro Gro's Lunar Lemon live resin infused joint is another one that's had us in space a time or two. It has a rich terpene profile, and the potency really shines through the mood-boosting high. But let's not forget Indico's aptly named Lost Cause rosin. If you appreciate the uplifting, cerebral high that makes putting on a clean shirt before a late-night run well, a lost cause, this non-solvent concentrate is right up your alley. You might even find yourself parked in an alley, trying really hard to remember where you were going in the first place. Why do you think they call them concentrates? >>



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EDIBLES

Cannabis edibles have come a long way since the days when batches of pot brownies were being baked up in the kitchens of Martha Stoners all across the world. It was a time when the only measuring tools needed were the palm of one's hand and some poor soul to try them once they popped out of the oven. If he was lying in the corner of the room asking for the number to 911 within 30 minutes, screaming something like, "This is it, boys! See you on the other side!" you just had to scale back the recipe the next time around. These days, THC-infused goodies are labeled for potency and even contain a friendly little warning label on the package suggesting that the average toker in training should probably start slow and low or suffer the consequences. But this message

typically doesn't stop the most adventurous canna-consumer from biting off more than they can chew. After all, any cannabis connoisseur who doesn't have a humorous story that begins with, "So I took way too many edibles one night," probably isn't one at all. Where's the fun in such restraint? The People's Choice Award judges had the opportunity to sample all sorts of high-powered pot provisions over the past few months. Kiva's Lost Farm strawberry fruit chews made with live resin is, without a doubt, one that stands out. They come in 10 mg servings, so they can, of course, be taken in moderation—if that's your thing—or for obliteration, which is definitely ours. Why not go further and wash them down with Mari y Juana's piña THC-infused soft drink?



PRE-ROLLS



The days when those on a quest to get stoned were forced to break up their buds on a copy of *High Times Magazine* while in a heated debate with a neighbor about whether the federal government will ever legalize in our lifetime are, for the most part, long gone. Anyone who is still struggling to MacGyver their way through a pack of rolling papers when, the last time we counted, there are more technologically advanced methods for getting red-eyed and ripped is either having a hard time letting go of their pothead past or just showing off. Either way, we're not impressed. Time is of the essence. Pre-rolls, regardless of whether you are fan or foe, have become a salvation's wing for the more traditional toker who's trying not to get confuddled with the

fancy commercial pot products of the post-legalization generation and the gadgets needed to use them. Most of today's users want to smoke grass without concern that some joint-rolling elitist will shame their ability to twist one up. The inception of the pre-roll is arguably the best of both worlds in terms of ease and convenience. Hey, now you can actually read *High Times Magazine* instead of using it to roll up a bag of schwag. Pre-rolls also offer cannabis users of all skill levels a fiscally friendly way to test out a variety of strains without too much of a commitment. And test them out, you should. You must! That's the job! People's Choice judged were digging on High Country Cone's Blue Apricot Gasoline and Top-Shelf Cultivation's Whoa Si Whoa. >>

VAPE PENS



The vape pen is precisely the tool the cannabis community has needed in its arsenal since the beginning of toking time. It could be argued that if these ganja gadgets had been invented in the early 1970s, back when President Nixon was getting squirrely about kicking some hippie tail, hundreds of thousands of recreational reefer chiefs could have avoided being nabbed. They're discreet and don't reek of skunk, which makes it virtually impossible for police to shakedown the average stoner without calling on a lab to investigate the contents. Considering that over half the United States is still under the ridiculous prohibition regime, cannabis fans need all the help they can get to

skirt the fuzz and, most importantly, stay out of jail. Vapes rule! Even in legal states, the vape pen is a mighty sword for those career-oriented cannabis enthusiasts who don't have the time or energy to pack a bowl or worry about stinking up the office stairwell before diving into spreadsheets and quarterly reports. Oh, baby, we can sympathize. One People's Choice standout is PAX's live rosin crafted from Blue Dream, a classic combination of Blueberry and Haze. Another winner, Natty Rems's Alien Haze vape, has an uncanny ability to conveniently transport people into deep space without much concern for radiation belts, dinosaur-snuffing asteroids, and rocket lag. >>



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TOPICALS

Anyone over age 40 can confirm that getting off the couch is, at times, a chore as the throbbing pain from this injury and that one tries to tell us that we are not superhuman like we once believed and we're officially on borrowed time. This is why one of the best innovations the cannabis industry has brought forth since marijuana legalization began making strides at the state level is the development of pain-relieving topicals. Anyone who has used them to deal with localized aches and pains will usually tell you that they are forever done with all of the over-the-counter crud they're slinging

down at the neighborhood Walgreens. If you think Icy Hot will help that construction worker on their feet for 12 hours a day, make it through until payday without a vicious back spasm, you are sadly mistaken. The relief from THC-infused topicals is unmatched by those weak, FDA-approved drugstore charlatans.

What's better is cannabis topicals aren't causing the working-class to suffer impairment issues or failed drug tests. Topicals don't produce a high. People's Choice winner Dr. May's Balance Pro 1000 mg Topical Balm (500 mg THC/500 mg CBD) is one to keep on hand. >>



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TINCTURES & CAPSULES

There are a few cannabis products on the market today that, amid the hype over edibles, concentrates, and beverages, don't get the credit they deserve. Tinctures are one of them. Historically speaking, however, these alcohol-based extracts are the OG's of cannabis medicine. During the early 20th century, they were legal in the United States and more revered for pain relief than ibuprofen. Yep, before Uncle Sam came along and criminalized the cannabis plant, cannabis tinctures could be purchased down at the local pharmacy along with toilet paper and toothpaste. They were a staple in many American medicine cabinets. Crazy, right? But now, meh. Consumers often look at these concoctions and think, "What the hell am I going to do with that?" But this is the wrong attitude

entirely. They're arguably the most versatile of legal weed wares. They can be dropped under the tongue or added to any food and beverage for a little extra kick in the pants. Be that as it may, whatever method is used to ingest these brews, understand one thing: They'll get you super stoned, that's for sure. The other day we dropped a few squirts of GO tincture from The Root of It All into a bottle of water before going across the street for lunch and had to ask our server for directions back. Capsules are another unsung hero of high merchandise. Sure, they're used mainly by patients in a therapeutic capacity, but that shouldn't deter you from exploring their recreational qualities. People's Choice judges recommend the 200 mg THC pills from Michigan Organic Rub.



HEMP



Hemp could have saved the world or, at the very least, our little slice of American pie. Every product manufactured with the resources that humanity has been squandering since the dawn of time could have been easily constructed and presumably cheaper with less environmental impact with hemp fiber. The economic benefits could have been nothing short of legendary. So, when it was revealed in 2018 that industrial hemp was finally going legal nationwide after more than 80 years, some farmers took a chance to get in on the action. None stopped to consider that the industrial sect controlling production in the land

of the free would be forced to make expensive changes to their daily operations to make hemp a viable alternative and the plant became a hard commodity to sell. And with no new commercial markets, farmers started going broke, and many rued the day they decided to invest in industrial hemp production. But the food, beverage, and medicinal sectors latched on and offered some salvation, buying up a portion of the nation's hemp crops to produce a variety of hemp-derived cannabis products from CBD to delta-8. Sweet Sensi's CBD chocolate truffles were a favorite among People's Choice Hemp Cup judges. **HT**

Check out all of the Cannabis Cup People's Choice Edition Winners at cannabiscup.com.

BEST OF 2022

THE YEAR OF THE HASH HOLE

Looking to get as high as possible in one convenient doob? Drop those moon rocks. If you don't know about donuts yet it's time to get familiar.

By Jon Cappetta

If there's one thing that has made 2022 slightly different than any year before it, it's gotta be the proliferation of the hash hole. Although infused doobs are nothing new, these expert level jumbo-sized cigar-like products have become all the rage with everyone from trappers to casual consumers looking for a memorable experience.

Although historically products like moon rocks have largely not captured the hearts and minds of general consumers, and while cannagars have been around for ages, somehow, the \$100 to \$150 plus pre-rolls filled with hash rosin have taken center stage for heady boys both domestic and abroad. So what's the big deal?

Donuts, or hash holes, or whatever your preferred nomenclature, are massive joints, typically rolled with several grams of flower, but the magic here is the molten rosin core that further infuses your flower while you're consuming. Not to mention you're consuming from between 0.5 to a full gram of rosin through the experience. They rock EVERYONE.

Now, you've likely seen a gaping shot of one of these joints

on Instagram, showing the rosin bubbling or the donut-like ash ring, but to put it into normie terms, y'all remember Ben & Jerry's Karamel Sutra Core? The ice cream with the solid core of straight caramel down the center of the pint? It's like that, but with top-quality flower and rosin. There's flower on the top and bottom of this one though—the core of goodness is centrally located within the flower cylinder.

Started by trappers with more product available than they knew what to do with, over the past two years these doobs made their way to the legal market, and quickly became the rage for those looking to get knocked out. They are products of massive excess, so they're not for everyone, but that hasn't stopped the new kids from going way too hard on 'em. Often rolled with a full eighth of flower and a full gram of rosin, these are probably the highest level smoke in the game today. Still, and despite the insane prices, fans across the nation are going stupid for them.

To continue with our December issue's tradition of providing the best the year had to offer, allow me to bring another category to your attention: the best donuts/hash holes/volcanoes/worm holes/hash snakes (whatever you want to call 'em) available today. Let's dig in! >>

-2022-

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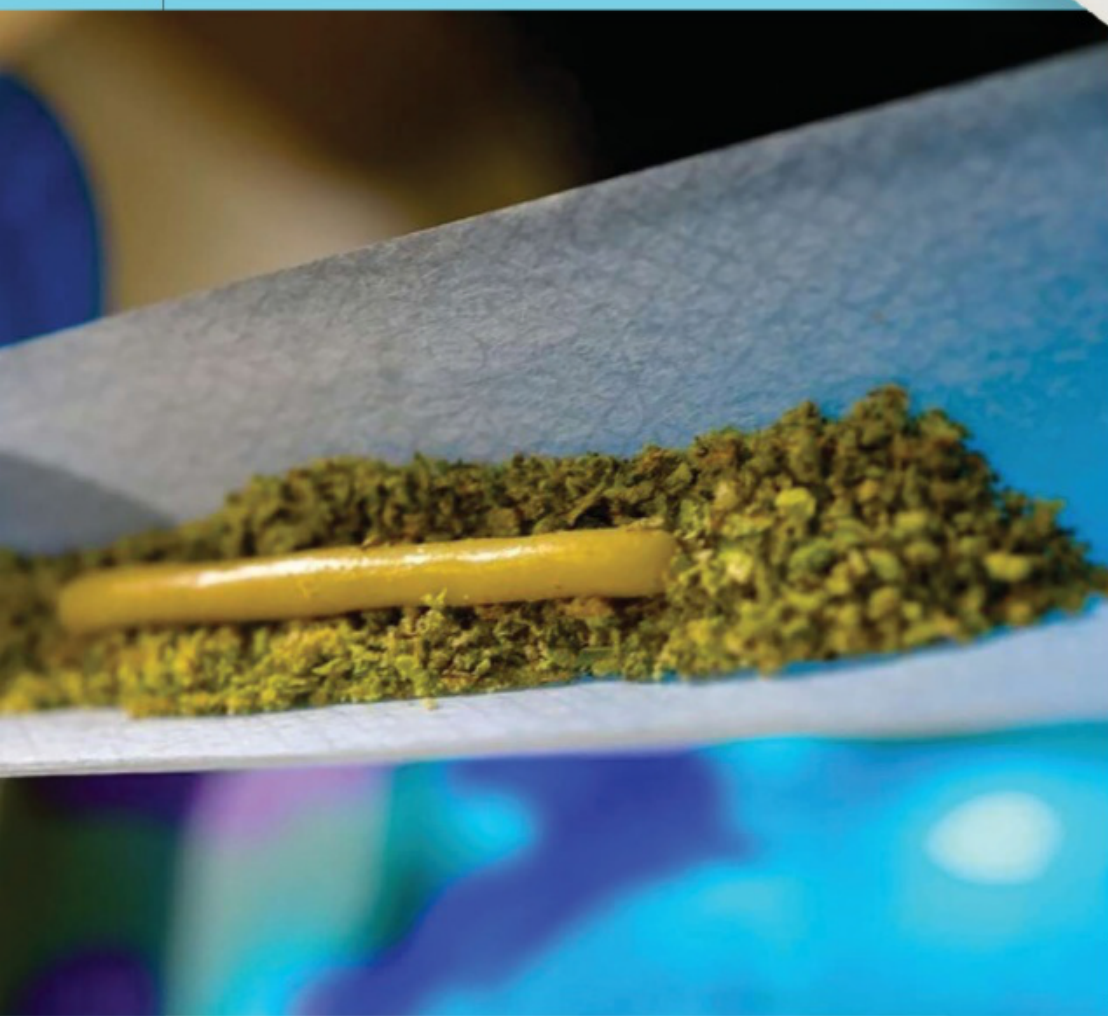
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2022'S MVP HASH HOLES



Fidel's

One of the first to coin the term “hash holes,” Fidel’s can largely be credited with creating the hype these products have developed. Offering multiple sizes (from smaller 2 g mini’s to the almost 4.5 g big boy size), before Fidel’s I was calling these things donuts, which is what I had first heard from the trap. In Fidel’s own words: donuts are for cops, so the hash hole was born. Now while hash holes have been great for his business, Fidel’s absolute rise to stardom over

the past few years have actually developed the larger category. You see, between collabs with industry legends like Champelli, and brands like Cookies, Fidel’s can really be credited for taking hash holes mainstream. Sure the trap has loved ‘em awhile, but the general consumers weren’t on the wave until Fidel’s showed up. Even further, he’s managed to bridge outside of cannabis, and through partnerships with artists like Aaron Kai and Anwar Carrots, Fidel’s continues to break new ground for all of us.

Artisan Cannagars

These guys have been doing Thai sticks and can-nagars for a long time, but somewhere over the past year they had their a-ha moment. That stick hole that used to run down the center of the Thai sticks? What if they just filled that with hash? Well voilà! They found themselves and in a few short months they’ve already created more than their fair share of memories for fans at events. You see, these guys aren’t doing any regular nonsense in their wraps, because of their expansive relationships you can see these guys at events across the coast both selling their own goods and creating new ones live IRL.



Dan's Rollin Up

Dan is probably my favorite joint producer of this type, and he's developed such a cult fanbase that almost everything he releases is sold before he's finished rolling. One of the first curators of combos I came across, in my opinion Dan takes this experience to the next level not just with his expert roll technique, but because he's constantly sourcing the best products the game has to offer and crafting combos filled with hype of the highest level. For example, it's the only place I know in the world where you can acquire flavors from the most in-demand creators paired with one another IN THE SAME TUBE. It's wild. Past that, Dan's products are so hard to acquire there's a literal golden ticket system just to acquire the ABILITY to purchase. No discounts, no first order special, just access. In a world that loves to pretend it's small batch while magically having enough to

serve the world, Dan is the real deal—there are never enough, and they're gone before they're made. If you ever have a chance to even get a hit off someone else's, one light pull will send a normie to Pluto to campaign for it's planetary recognition.

Chaliques

Another traditional combo play, and taking a page from Dan's playbook, Chaliques does an incredible job with their "forced collabs" which are (as it sounds) a compilation of their favorite flavor profiles, forced onto unsuspecting brands who were expecting pearls and ended up with diamonds. By avoiding the politics of the game, the gang at Chaliques have managed to turn some of the best flavor profiles out there on its head, bringing out entirely new terps as the two flavors melt together. Not only that, but these guys are plugged in with everybody, so nine times out of 10 the batches they're getting are better than what's hitting store shelves.

Bonus: Hash Paper Joints

Now I'll admit, while donuts are rad, they're actually NOT my favorite new super infused doob available right now, and I couldn't let this moment pass without putting you on. Friends, papers or wraps are no longer necessary when it comes to roasting bones, all you need is an enchanting hash paper joint. Originally created by Pixie Stix, and to this day still the best execution I've seen, hash paper joints are IMHO the future of smoke. Rolled utilizing just flower and a thin layer of hash wrapped around the outside to hold everything together, these don't even remotely give me moon rock vibes. They're simply science taking joint smoking to the next level. Now, Pixie's still traditional market, and while I would say it's worth going out of your way to find, I've already seen two others trying this method to varying results, Lowell and Axiom, so there are cheaper and entry level versions coming too. While neither stood up against Pixie (naturally, as he's been doing it quite a bit longer and is an expert cultivator) so maybe the other guys will get better before long, but it wouldn't surprise me if in 2023 this piece is about 100% cannabis derived doobs, and I'm here for it. 



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"Pearl 1."
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BEST INFUSED PRE-ROLL

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"In House Genetics Cakes n Cream."
- Tom



"JJ the kitty cat patiently waiting for his cloned Girl Scout Cookies in VA."
- Justin @JTOLLEY540



"Rockwool... I call it octopus legs."
- Ryan



LEMON CHERRY GELATO





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**LEMON CHERRY
GELATO**

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LEMON CHERRY GELATO

ON THE BACK COVER



The Best of the Best East & West

The *High Times* editorial staff searched far and wide to speak with cannabis brands that are proving to be some of the biggest winners across the nation. And, if you're looking to learn more about how to make your own cannabis edibles at home, or which tools are the most important for home cultivators, you've come to the right place.

ILLUSTRATION: GUSTAVO PERGOLI

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22 Best Brands of 2022

The best cannabis brands do more for their customers than just sell a product—they celebrate cannabis, embrace sustainability, grow great genetics, and help support their local communities. These brands, chosen from states throughout the U.S. where cannabis is now legal for adults, exemplify what it means to be committed to the plant, as well as to the consumer.

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Get Your Grow On

Amateur growers don't need fancy commercial equipment to grow great weed at home, but there are a few items that are essential to success. Check out this fundamental guide to growing indoor cannabis to ensure you've got the tools for sweet success.

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Practice Makes Perfect

Comedian, musician, singer, and actor Reggie Watts loves edibles. They're the perfect way to get good vibes when he's playing video games, watching a science fiction movie, and challenging himself to complete technical tasks when high.



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D.I.Y. Edibles Essentials

Culinary cannabis educator Christina Wong created Fruit + Flower Co. to help people learn how to make their own edibles from home. She provides essential tips on how to begin your home edibles journey and provides an infused shortbread bar recipe that is gorgeously decorated with edible flowers and cannabis leaves.

**A LOOK AT
SOME OF
THE BIGGEST
WINNERS IN
WEED.**

22 BEST BRANDS OF 2022

*By Benjamin M. Adams,
Jimi Devine, Ellen Holland,
and Ashley Kern*

Brand-building is big business, particularly in cannabis where customer loyalty reigns supreme when it comes to success. Whether it was in making new types of cannabis, growing quality flowers, or crafting terpy and potent concentrates and delicious edibles, here are our picks of some of the brands that defined 2022.



WEST

► **Compound Genetics**

Compound Genetics went into 2022 riding on a high and just kept on sailing along. Massive seed drops and a variety of people taking home trophies all over North America with their gear are seemingly commonplace for them at this point, but it's still impressive.

We've had a front-row seat to their breeding efforts since the move to San Francisco a few years ago and then the eventual partnership with Node Labs where they phenohunt and stress test the new gear to make sure it's commercially viable. From that work we've seen names like Jokerz, Red Bullz, and Pave explode onto the scene.

"2022 has been a year of adapting to my surroundings, opportunities, and adversities," founder Chris Lynch says. "High levels of success bring new challenges that constantly test your ability to perform and stay consistent. I'm grateful for where I am in this industry and what I've achieved with Compound Genetics. Being in my position is something I take seriously, it's a unique responsibility that's driven by my passion for quality. I'm excited for the next chapters with this special plant and where they take me."

Don't expect anything to slow down in the near future. This year for The Emerald Cup Compound is releasing the Jokerz line. The pairing of Jet Fuel Gelato and White Runtz was one of the strains that Compound used to launch their flower line earlier this year. The community is thirsty for a new round of crosses from it.

It's also fair to expect Compound's international profile to continue to build. There are a few factors contributing to that including their collaboration efforts with Green House Seed Co. and their partnership with Paradise Seeds to facilitate European distribution.

As for what strains to keep an eye on, we saw a phenotype of Apples & Bananas x Pave that was batshit heat, but we're sure you can expect a few more than that in 2023.—JD

► **Blueprint**

As we mentioned in our strains of the year write-up, few have ever had a year similar to the one the Blueprint team had in 2022.



TRIPLE LINDY GROWN BY BLUEPRINT.

Even a couple months before they hit shelves in the summer of 2022, the hype was percolating hard. A lot of the biggest names in Sacramento, and hence elite cannabis in general, were saying to keep an eye out for what Blueprint had in store. They were not wrong.

The first drop featured names like P90 and Triple Lindy. They are still top of the food chain heat a year-and-a-half later as we noted in our favorite strains of 2022 where we highlighted the Triple Lindy.

One of the things that we got a kick out of about Blueprint was how close they've kept the cards to their chest when it



FIDEL'S HASH HOLE COMBINES ROSIN AND FLOWER.

comes to genetics. Most of the time lineage has a lot to do with what gets people excited. A lot of the hype we see in weed in general comes from the next generation of something with a known pedigree. Unlike these companies that push their genetics lines and work as the basis of their ethos, the fire behind Blueprint is pure heat. And the community figured that out quickly. Never will you hear anyone complaining because they don't know the makeup of Blueprint's genetics, they're just happy they got to smoke it in the first place.

Blueprint sifts through roughly 140 new flavors every couple of months. We will continue to be wildly excited to try what they find and grow to some of the highest quality levels on the globe. We expect 2023 to see the same level of heat that won them the second edition of Zalypix and what a lot of people thought was the best flower at the industry mega show Hall of Flowers where they could be compared directly against the rest of the pack. —JD

► Backpack Boyz

Since its founding as a delivery service in the Prop 215 era between cannabis powerhouses San Francisco and Sacramento, the Backpack Boyz have had a complete dedication to the absolute flame.

"So what I was trying to do at the time, was I was trying to get all of the buds that everyone wanted to smoke but didn't have access to," Backpack Boyz founder Juan Quesada told *High Times*. "I wanted to get that all under one banner and kind of be that one guy that you can see and can get everything from. So, long story short, that was kind of really where it started."

When he first got the ball rolling he had a lot of deep connections on the cultivation side, but a lot of the product he was moving was white label heat from Sacramento. Eventually, the people coming for that Sac heat started asking Quesada about the flavors he was curating more locally. It was a big confidence booster for him.

Most famously, he would pop Lemon Cherry Gelato from bag seed in 2017. (We go into the full tale in our strains of the year section.) This would catapult the Backpack Boyz into California's elite. They would eventually open their first retail location in early 2021. Two more would follow by the end of the year.

The brand has done particularly well in making inroads in Southern California after its initial founding up north. Quesada says having the heat helped but he gave his SoCal partners a lot of credit for helping him handle all the local hurdles that came with expanding the company's footprint across the state.

In 2023, you can definitely expect the Backpack Boyz to keep stocking all the most elite cannabis in the state while continuing to curate a few exceptional flavors of their own. —JD

► Fidel's

The third and youngest son of L.A.'s favorite weed family (his older brother Serge is behind Cookies Maywood and his other older brother Aram is behind Gas No Breaks) saw one of the most epic 2022s of just about anyone and his new cultivation facility didn't even open until the end of the year.



CAKE CRASHERS GROWN BY 710 LABS

Helping backbone the big year was the rise of the hash hole, arguably the most exotic pre-roll currently available in California. Fidel first encountered the hash hole in Barcelona years ago at Spannabis. The locals would roll up an eighth with some rosin in it to celebrate the weed making it from California—or just to flex.

Back then, Fidel was already growing heat. After spending six years in Beirut from age 12 to 18, he returned to Los Angeles where he spent many years working in a hydro shop. Those years at the grow shop was where he dialed in his game and earned the name Fidel Hydro.

On a trip back to visit friends and family in Lebanon, one of his friends designed the now well-known logo. After that, the race was on. Things have gone so well with his brand that he's even got his parents in on the act these days. He bought a printer for their house where they do quality control on all his packaging.

Earlier this year at Spannabis, he hosted one of the event's most popping parties, the Hash Holes and Donuts event at Cookies Barcelona. Later in the summer, Fidel's would take home top honors at The Transbay Challenge IV: Hollywood with his pairing of Kush Mints and Zkittlez.

And we can't emphasize enough that all this happened before his facility was even open. Expect to see Fidel's flower on even more dispensary shelves across California soon. Until that day, you can still get your hands on hash holes—if you see them on a menu, pull the trigger quickly. They don't last long since they're worth big money outside the state, they are one of the few packaged products there is true value in moving compared to bulk flowers in big quantities. —JD

► 710 Labs

The name 710 Labs is synonymous with small batch quality with myopic attention to detail. Every good concentrate must begin with a good strain, and the company's cultivation operations are steadily growing. 710 Labs attributes that growth to their commitment to integrity in the cultivation process.

"We've had a lot of growth in the past year, which wouldn't be possible if we didn't stay true to what got us here: quality focused small batches with a wide variety of flavors," says Richard Sciascia, vice president of cultivation.

Even though 710 Labs has expanded from its home-base in Colorado to California, they still adopt the same principles they've observed since the beginning when they launched as a much smaller operation a decade ago. Part of that is allowing the unique and individual traits of cultivars to

shine. That can't happen when producers pump out mass amounts of a single strain.

"We aren't monocropping rooms with one genetic, we flower rooms with one cultivar per bench," Sciascia says. "Other companies—a fraction of our size—are growing batches many times larger with one genetic. That *doesn't* excite us."

Some of that quality is lost when companies bank on strain yields alone, or other aspects that don't necessarily benefit the consumer.

"We love this plant and all her expressions, and want to see cultivar diversity in our offerings to the consumer," Sciascia says. "Palate is subjective, and if we limited ourselves to the 10 hottest strains of the year, we'd be doing a disservice to the connoisseur and casual smoker alike."

710 Labs houses a genetic library that varies between 150-200 unique cultivars, rotating between old, new, experimental, and the tried-and-true. Some classics associated with 710 Labs—Ghost Hulk #25, Black Mamba #6, and Randy Watzon—are grown regularly, sometimes shelved for six months, and others are discarded quickly to make way for new additions. Over 80% of their library has been selected by the 710 Labs team from seed. Pheno hunting is part of the agenda and selections depend on whether the end result is hash or dried flower.

Currently the focus at 710 Labs is finding rare terp combos in newer cultivars.

"The never ending terp quest is what excites us, and we hope you feel the same," Sciascia says.

Beyond flower, 710 Labs live resin pens passed the bar among highly critical vape reviewers. Their solventless water hash, rosin, and rosin sap are no joke, as they begin with flavorful flowers. Persy sauce is also a squishy new addition to their concentrate lineup, as the trichomes are preserved in the first wash to maximize flavor. —BA

► Veritas

"Veritas" is Latin for "the truth," and it's all about transparency at this Colorado-based operation. The Veritas team is currently working with Node Labs to produce new genetics, and with that, they will be producing healthy clones set to be released to the public in early 2023.

Narrowing down those clones is a long, meticulous process, and incorporating the right technology is key in keeping things organized and avoiding losing track of special genetics.

"We take about 400 different cuts, and then those have been removed from the mom and manicured [and placed] into our cloners," says Jordan Plunkett, marketing director of Veritas. "And from there, it takes about 14 days."



APPLE FRITTER



ASHY HONEY



BUTT NASTY



AL HARRINGTON INSPECTS SOME VIOLA FLOWER.

Part of their operations incorporate equipment that is exactly what you'd expect, while other processes are unique to the company. Veritas plants flower in atmosphere-controlled environments under high pressure sodium lights. The crew then adds as many as 100 bamboo stakes to help spread out branches and maximize trichome development.

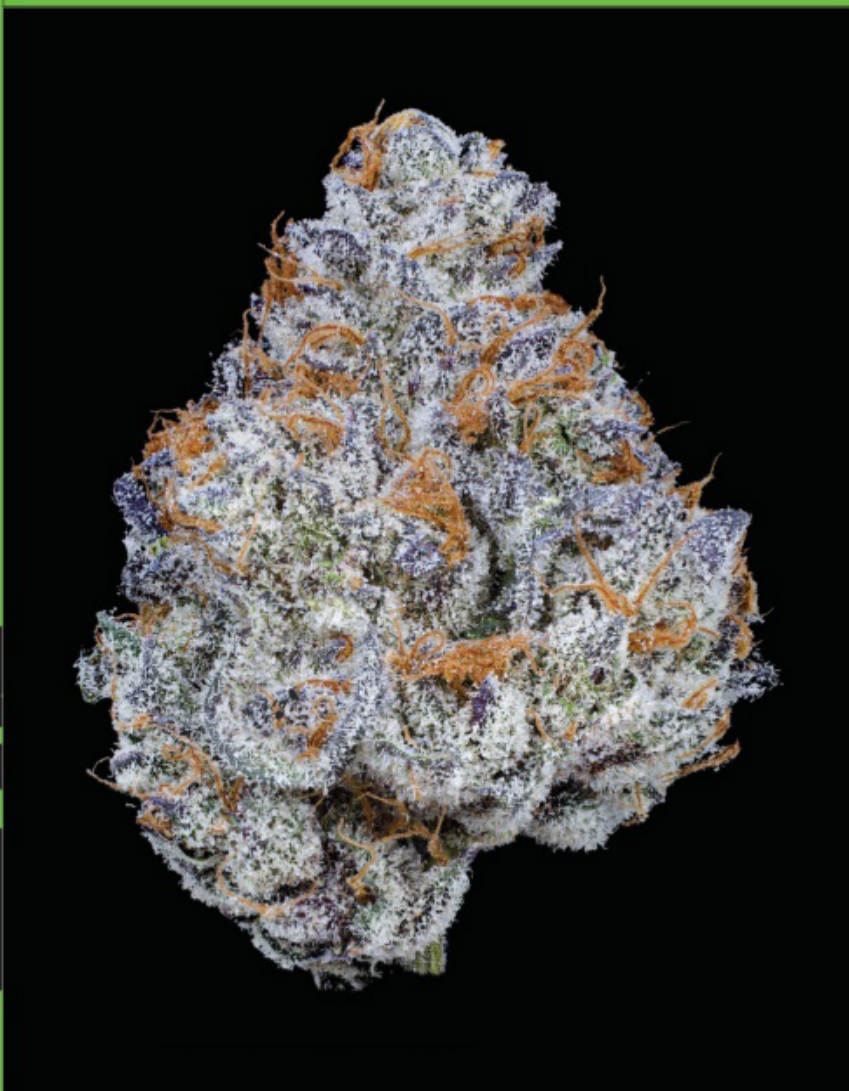
"We have bamboo stakes that we use in our plants," Plunkett says. "This is something that we have not seen any other cultivators doing. The reason behind it is that we believe it gives more stability. And then they actually utilize these stakes to track where it's at in the process. So this is a very unique kind of opportunity to really take care of our plants the right way. It's definitely not an easy process; We don't take the easy approach to this by any means, but we do believe that this will give us a better quality."

Veritas recently released infused joints, containing 1 gram of Veritas flower and 0.25 grams of ice hash. In 2021, they also released a limited-edition half-ounce offering that resembled a drink holder you'd get from a fast food joint and contained a four-pack of eighths. Stay tuned for more unusual products that you won't find anywhere else.—BA

► Viola Brands

Al Harrington's Viola Brands, named after his grandmother who turned to medical cannabis to battle glaucoma, is a blueprint for success in the world of cannabis. You can tell by the company's high-end promotions, packaging, and most of all—their consistent quality flower.

This isn't by accident. No spur-of-the-moment decisions are made when it comes to narrowing down cultivars at



LANDSLIDE GROWN BY FREDDY'S FUEGO

Viola. The company's cultivation team will grow new genetics several times over before deciding if it makes the cut.

"When bringing in new genetics, we grade each on bag appeal, yield, and testing both THC and terpenes," says Tanner Steele, Viola's vice president of operations. "Generally, we like to grow new genetics three to six times before releasing them to market. This ensures everything we produce thrives in our environments to provide a consistent customer experience."

Both cultivation and processing take place at Viola's original 12,000-square-foot facility in Colorado. The company has expanded well beyond the limits of Colorado, however. In Falls City, Oregon, Viola operates an 80,000-square-foot facility. In Detroit, Michigan, Viola operates a 46,000-square-foot cultivation facility as well as a provisioning center. In Detroit, 40 cultivars are rotated each year. The process begins with the seed.

"When we look to bring unique or different genetics to the market, we start with seeds," Steele says. "Most Viola strains are a result of several rounds of pheno hunting to get the best genetics for our environment."

Clone mothers are rotated and replaced on a regular

basis. "When re-populating our flower rooms we clone from moms whose genetics have already been proven to provide yield, appeal, and testing for THC and terpenes," Steele says. "We keep our moms alive for two to three months maximum before replacing them with a new mom from the genetic line."

Beyond cannabis, the Viola Cares community engagement branch works to reinvest in struggling communities and promote social equity inside the cannabis industry. Last year, the company launched the Harrington Institute of Cannabis Education, with the help of the Cleveland School of Cannabis to provide an online curriculum designed to prepare students to work in the cannabis industry. Viola also launched an accelerator to help cannabis start-ups get a foot on the ground, and it has a very specific goal: to create 100 Black millionaires within the cannabis space. This is because they believe Black business owners face the most challenges in this industry. —BA

► Freddy's Fuego

Pirate-themed Freddy's Fuego, a Tier 3 producer/processor in Washington state, adopts a more interactive way of narrowing down the finest fire in the state from an assortment of breeders. Freddy's annual pheno hunt called "The Hunt" is a spectacle, as the public judges new cultivar cuts on the Hunt Scorecard with questions about visual aspects, taste, aroma, and overall appeal. It's almost like hunting for booty and gold.

"Freddy's embodies the pirate archetype—the fearless soul of exploration and a loyalty to evolution as we navigate the uncharted waters of the industry," says Freddy's Fuego Marketing Director Blake Stango. "Always on 'The Hunt' to find the freshest and rarest genetics."

Freddy's Fuego was founded in 2013 by Ben Davis and Tim Haggerty. Since then, Freddy's has won numerous awards including Best Indoor Grown Hybrid Flower for a fire batch of LA Cookies at Dope Cup Washington in 2018 and three awards in one year at the 2019 *High Times* Cannabis Cup Seattle for Larry Cake flower and pre-rolls, as well as Guava Jelly, named after a sensual Bob Marley song.

Like *High Times* People's Choice Cannabis Cups, during The Hunt, they don't limit the judges to exclusive experts. Anyone can login, fill out a Hunt Scorecard and begin judging.

"This year in August, we popped 520 different seeds from about 10 to 15 different breeders—40 different strains," Freddy's Fuego Director of Cultivation Roger Hale says of the event that generates a fair amount of excitement in the Northwest region.



BEST OF 2022

“Our process for running through the pheno hunt is we pop all those seeds out of the rockwool, grow them for X amount of time until they’re large enough to basically go into flower,” Hale says. “At that point, we take a bunch of clones from them to produce moms stock, throw them into flower, flower those babies out, get strain notes on them: how they grew, what the yield is, the output inside of our environment, how our feed was, everything.”

Judges choose their favorites in the Hunt Scorecard based on flavor, uniqueness profile, all the good things that everybody’s looking for.

The first iteration of The Hunt begins in January every year, with subsequent judging rounds taking place in the following months. “We release all of those flavors to the public right around January and let everybody try them out,” Hale says. “Everybody gets to vote on which strains they want to have go into the next iteration of The Hunt.”

They continue to narrow down strains in subsequent rounds going into the summer. Freddy’s Fuego then takes that information and advances to the next step of The Hunt, the harvest, when the team gets the strain data back. “The last iteration of our hunt, we run those through the end of summer, choose our top four to six cultivars that we’re going to put into finalists based on what the public chooses,” Hale says.

Then Freddy’s throws a big party at the end of the year and lets everybody check out the new strains and vote on their favorite phenos. The company then takes those and begins producing them for the next year under their exclusive Freddy’s Finest label which is basically their black label collection. This allows the public to take part in the cultivar selection and judging process.

Consumers can buy limited edition eighths of The Hunt selections.—BA

► Exotic Genetix

Few companies have racked up as many Cannabis Cup wins as Exotic Genetix. This seed bank, based in Washington state, has produced so many classic cultivars that if you haven’t smoked at least one, you better start the roll up right now. A standout includes the 2018 classic Rainbow Chip, a winning combination of Sunset Sherbert and Mint Chocolate Chip. With Kush and Cookies in the family tree, Rainbow Chip has gas.

“That was pre-Runtz people wanted the gasses, the fuels,” breeder Mike explains of the older Rainbow Chip release. “They range in aromas, the gassy fuel to some of the Rainbows are kind of funky, soggy. Some of them have like a nice ice cream/sherby/gas element to it.”

Founded in 2008, Exotic Genetix also gave the world

Kimbo Kush and Grease Monkey. In 2022, we tried a lovely version of Funky Charms, Rainbow Chip x Grease Monkey, grown by Wood Wide High Craft.

In 2022, Exotic Genetix released a line of Red Runtz crosses in feminized seeds, a follow-up to the success of a 2021 Red Runtz line release.

“It was super popular, it erupted,” Mike says of the 2021 release. “I told myself after that release, like I’m only going to once, I’m not trying to stick around on Runtz because, you know, it’s the hype thing. And don’t get me wrong, Runtz is hype, but also there’s a reason for it because it’s good shit.”

He says Runtz, when paired with his genetic line-up, gave it a different edge by providing that “Runtz flair candy” taste the market was craving.

“Now, I’m going to try not to do any more Runtz. It’s hard, because people ask me every day like when’s the Greasy Runtz going to drop and I’m like ‘Fuck. I’m not doing Runtz anymore,’ but I do have a Greasy Runtz line-up just waiting to be released,” he says with a laugh.

Working with feminized seeds has been a key in his success.

“When you do feminized seeds, you take an amazing strain in female form and you manipulate a few things and you can reverse that female and make it release male pollen,” Mike explains. “When you do that, and you use that pollen on your receiver, so to speak, all your other strains, it makes all those seeds that you made feminized. So, now you end up with seeds that you don’t get any males from.”

When creating new kinds of cannabis the results generally either suck or are amazing, there isn’t much in between, he says.

“Ever since I started reversing things that started awesome and making feminized seeds with those amazing starting plants, or the starting plant that I reverse, most of the things they come out amazing,” Mike says. “I don’t mean that like I’m full of myself. I mean like when you choose a male that you can’t see how it’s expressed in female form. It’s hard for you to get a predisposition of how that’s going to breed until you do it a couple times and see what your offspring do. But with the female that you reverse, you already know... it’s kind of a cheating step, but it’s there for a reason and ever since it’s been a told that I’ve used I haven’t turned back because it saves you a lot of time of hunting, going through stuff that isn’t what you’re looking for.”

Mike gained the nickname “Big Stimmy” during the pandemic for Instagram live broadcasts during the time of government stimulus efforts in which he was giving away seed packs. Big Stimmy hosted the “Milk Show” which was full of people pouring milk on unsuspecting victims for prizes.

In the future, look out for the next release of Gary Poppins, Gary Payton x Red Pop. —EH



► Archive Seed Bank

Ask a legendary cannabis breeder what they're smoking and they'll likely flip the question around to the one thing that is ever-present in their mind: selecting, creating, and cultivating new types of flowers. That was the case when we caught up with Archive Seed Bank breeder Fletcher Watson as he drove to his grow room to continue sifting through what will become a new line of genetics, the Flavour Pack reversal feminized line. The journey breeders go through to bring new cultivars into our lungs are immense. When we speak, Watson's getting down to the final stages of selection. He's taken the Flavour Pack cultivar he created and reversed the plant to produce male pollen. Next, he took that male pollen and combined it with 60 different varieties of cannabis. He's grown out 30 types from the seed stock so far, this is only the initial run.

"I've got about 150 to 200 seed plants of those Flavour Pack hybrids with all kinds of other stuff that I'm literally on my way driving to right now, to go through the samples and start picking through the population," he says over a phone call in early fall.

Flavour Pack, which is only one of the seed lines Watson is working on simultaneously with others, blends together old and new genetics in the cannabis family tree. It's a cross of Hollywood Pure Kush, an OG Kush cut, with a newer one of Watson's creations, Moonbow (Zkittlez x Do-Si-Dos).

"Essentially what we do is try to improve certain cultivars that are either popular in the market—the terpene profile is popular in the market and I just like it personally a lot—and mix it with a bunch of old weird stuff that may not have market appeal," Watson says. "The reason I breed cannabis is I want to, in one way or another, improve upon a variety."

Watson was 16 when he started growing weed and career-wise, it's all he's ever done. His nickname "ThaDocta" comes from a screen name he chose back in those days, one he gained from his time at the skate-park, where he hurt himself so often he started carrying a medical kit.

Archive was founded in Oregon in 2011 and has since blessed the world with many award-winning strains. Archive's OGKB was one of the parents of Do-Si-Dos. Rainbow Belts (Moonbow x Zkittlez) came out in 2017 and is still crushing the competition scene. Watson sent out Rainbow Belts genetics to about 50 people in 2020 and once it reached the clone-seller market it exploded. It has the fruity Zkittlez terps that people love, combined

with a kushy dankness.

"The reason you don't see too much Zkittlez on the market is it's such a difficult plant for most people to grow," Watson explains. "By expanding a line that has that terpene profile really well stabilized within the population, people are able to take advantage of that market that wants that smell and flavor, but get better plants, with better yields and higher [THC] tests making it more marketable to the broader consumer."

And when an Archive cultivar reaches that stage it can really pop. In 2022, Archive Seeds released Dark Rainbow 2.0. On its website Archive explains the first generation, Dark Rainbow 1.0, used GMO combined with Moonbow and carried the gassy flavors of the GMO alongside the lime candy taste of Moonbow. The second generation is GMO combined with Planet Purple, the offspring of which is generally not sweet, but "raunchy stank breath rotten meat gas tank stank." Watson says this one is great for hash, which Archive also makes and carries in its Portland, Oregon shop along with house flowers and clones.

"My breeding is less of knowing exactly what I'm trying to make, it's more of throwing darts at the wall and seeing what sticks," Watson says. —EH

► Sunday Goods

Sunday Goods (owned by its parent company The Pharm) is based in Arizona and focuses on producing quality cannabis combined with feel-good vibes.

Although Arizona is often associated with brutally hot temperatures, Sunday Goods and The Pharm's flower is grown in a 7-acre, 300,000-square-foot Dutch glass greenhouse in Willcox, Arizona. The climate in Willcox is mild compared to other parts of the state and often sees more rainfall than Phoenix or Tucson, making it a good place to grow quality cannabis (although many other agricultural goods thrive there as well).

Some of the brand's most high-demand products include high-potency THC strains, including one called Bangers x Mac.

"That's a cross between Headbanger and Miracle Alien Cookies (MAC), and it's a super dank, very diesely, piney strain," says Matt Daley, vice president of marketing for Sunday Goods.

Not only does Sunday Goods flower take advantage of the mild climate, the location of the grow is also home to a geothermal well that The Pharm uses to reduce heating needs during the colder months, helping to reduce energy consumption.

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BEST OF 2022

Alongside its own flower Sunday Goods offers a wide variety of other local cannabis brands, all of which align with the brand's desire to offer consumers with the best products to help them feel their "Sunday best."

Sunday Goods is dedicated to the support of the cannabis community, having partnered with the Last Prisoner Project to raise funds and help the organization continue to fight against cannabis injustice. In November 2021, Sunday Goods joined with Arizona NORML to host expungement clinics for those who have low-level cannabis offenses on their records.

"We're just looking to provide relief, a pathway to creativity, an outstretched hand to an elevated sense of being because I think all of us here at Sunday Goods believe that everyone stands to benefit from what this plant can deliver," Daley says. —AK

► Wyld

Wyld is one of the most recognizable and popular cannabis edibles brands. Praised for its consistency across multiple markets (it began in Oregon but has since spread to Arizona, California, Colorado, Michigan, Nevada, Oklahoma, and Washington), Wyld earned its place as a top brand by producing a line of fruit-forward gummies.

According to Wyld Corporate Communications Specialist Rachael Smith, there are three flavors in particular that consumers have fallen in love with.

"Our top three national bestsellers are elderberry 2:1 THC:CBN indica-enhanced, raspberry sativa-enhanced, and huckleberry hybrid-enhanced gummies," Smith says. "Most states follow this same trend with elderberry leading the pack. Recent sales data shows Wyld leading the country nationally with the top six edible products in the U.S. and with nine products in the top 20—more than any other single brand."

The Wyld supply team goes to great lengths to ensure that each product includes the advertised amount of potency.

"We use a three-test process to ensure a high quality end product," Smith says. "Test one: cannabis extract is tested before we receive it to ensure quality and potency. Test two: Our cannabis-infused coconut oil is tested again in house to ensure appropriate dosing in our products. Test three: Once made, the edibles are tested again to certify they are consistent with our exacting potency standards. The last test also includes random selection of products for testing by a third-party lab. All of our third-party testing is conducted by state-certified lab partners."

Wyld is also dedicated to sustainability, going as far as providing an annual social and environmental impact

report (data for 2022 is set to be released during the first half of 2023).

“We’ll be launching our new solventless hash rosin gummy brand in select markets in the fourth quarter of this year,” Smith says. “In 2023, in addition to rolling out compostable packaging in the U.S., our plans include expanding further into the Midwest and East Coast and, as always, we look forward to offering new real fruit flavors with innovative cannabinoid content—keep your eyes on Wyld, we’ve got so much more to offer.”—AK

► High Road Edibles

Montana is known for its vast landscapes, pristine natural beauty, and as of Jan. 1, 2022, adult-use cannabis.

High Road Edibles predates this monumental shift from medical to adult-use sales, having established itself in 2019. The brand was founded by Michael Zens and Ben Miller, two college roommates who enjoy spending time outdoors and sought out to develop a cannabis brand exclusive to their home state.

All of High Road Edibles products are made with full-spectrum cannabis extract. Hybrid cannabis strains come from Sacred Sun Farms, and indica- or sativa-leaning strains come from Collective Elevation, both of which are farms based out of Bozeman, Montana, located in the southern part of the state. High Road Edibles is also partnered with a local dispensary, Dancing Goat Gardens.

The brand features an assortment of gummies, chocolate bars, and mints.

“We started with kind of trying to pick flavors that we thought match the mood state and the strain types we were using,” Miller says. “So more kind of bright, energizing flavors for things like sativa, and more kind of deep, rich flavors for the indica. And then for the hybrid, we kind of just tried to hit those quintessential candy flavors that we all really enjoy, you know, peach and green apple on the gummies, cinnamon on the mint, and then that coffee almond on the chocolate bar.”

Zens adds that their sativa-leaning strawberry flavor gummy sells the best in the Bozeman/southern Montana area, where people tend to be more active. However, in the northern part of the state, around Kalispell and Whitefish, there are more older consumers who prefer the indica-leaning blood orange gummies. This summer, High Road Edibles released a huckleberry flavor, in honor of the berry of the same name that populates the northern parts of the U.S. and is a celebrated summertime ingredient (Zens and Miller joke that huckleberries are a prominent food source for wild bears, as well as tourists).



While the state's medical cannabis program was restrictive, Montana's adult-use program has helped open things up. According to Zens, it has allowed the local cannabis community to develop and grow.

"It's been really kind of fun to actually like, get out there and meet everyone," Zens says. "Because in the restrictive market, everyone was kind of competing against each other a little bit more. We're in this wholesale recreational market, everyone can kind of specialize in something and support each other and link up, and kind of create a community that wasn't there before as much."

Both Miller and Zens enjoy floating in the various rivers in Montana, but agree that cannabis consumption can be an enjoyable companion for numerous other outdoor activities including hiking. The founding duo alluded to new flavors and products coming out in 2023. **-AK**

► Aether Gardens

Located in the northeast corner of Las Vegas, Nevada, Aether Gardens's state-of-the-art facility covers 120,000 square feet divided into numerous sections including cultivation, extraction, manufacturing, and distribution. It was recently ranked #10 on a list of MJ Unpacked's hottest Nevada-based cannabis brands, which is no surprise since it won two placements in the Cannabis Cup Nevada: People's Choice Edition in 2021: 2nd place for best indica with Slurricane #7, and 1st place for indica concentrates with Banana ice water indica live rosin. Aether Gardens also has a 2019 *High Times* Cannabis Cup Nevada 1st place win for hybrid concentrates with Zweet Insanity.

According to Aether Gardens Cannabis Officer Justin Hernandez, consumers should keep an eye out for the popular strain MAC that has been thriving in the facility. Strains like Blue Cheese, Banana, and Blue Java are also popular. Online, Aether Gardens recently showcased its ultra-sweet, flavor-packed strains Mimosé (Mimosa x Rosé) and Terple (Tropicana Cookies x Slurricane #7).

Aether Gardens has been producing cannabis out of its facility since 2018, and, over the years, has continued to develop its tissue culture lab, which now houses 400 cannabis varieties. All of the strains are grown in a structure that takes advantage of sunlight through the use of glass panels. The company also formulates its own nutrient line.

Other areas of the facility are dedicated to the creation of numerous extraction products, from concentrates to edibles. Aether Gardens's production also serves many other brand partners, such as house brand The Fifty Five as well as STIIIZY, Binske, Huni Labs, Pro Canna, and Hervé. **-AK**

► Mountaintop Extracts

Mountaintop Extracts has been helping patients gain access to clean, effective cannabis medicine since 2012, but now that adult-use sales is legal in New Mexico (effective as of April 1, 2022), the brand continues to offer quality cannabis products to a wider market.

The Mountaintop Extracts logo features a towering mountain inspired by the Sandia Mountains, which overlooks the city of Albuquerque where the brand is based. Mountaintop Extracts is 100% family-owned, and founder Eric Merryman holds his brand to the highest standard when producing cannabis products for consumers.

"At Mountaintop [Extracts] we really focus on clean, consistent safe medicine and are committed to the educational process so much needed in our industry," Merryman says. "We are extremely passionate about what we do and have been very fortunate to attract like-minded employees who are making a difference in our industry."

Joel Krukar, director of business development and marketing at Mountaintop Extracts, explains that the brand utilizes proprietary methods and techniques, which it's been perfecting for years, to ensure that all of its products are of the highest quality.

"That's what makes our edibles different. Our vape cartridges are live resin true full spectrum...We don't cut it with anything. Nothing is reintroduced," Krukar says. "And our diamonds became a huge success, [they were] really big in the beginning because we were one of the first [in the state] to actually really master growing large grade diamonds. I believe the largest diamond, it was like 7 grams, actually. So we have techniques to really grow very rich, large diamonds."

And Mountaintop Extracts has the accolades to prove it too. At the 2018 Essie Awards hosted by *Kurple Magazine*, Mountaintop Extracts took home awards for best infused product, best edible, and best concentrate.

A longtime favorite of medical cannabis patients, Krukar says that the brand's gummies are one of their biggest sellers.

"Our gummies are by far the highest velocity products we have. We are producing more units of gummies per month than anything else," Krukar says. "But it's also sometimes a condition of the market. And I personally love our vapes, and people love our vapes as well too, because we're the only ones providing that live resin, true full-spectrum, full-integrity vape cartridge."

In the very near future, Mountaintop Extracts has plans to reveal a new logo, new packaging, and a new patent-pending product to add to its current lineup. **-AK**



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EAST

► **3rd Coast Genetics**

There's a reason behind why Michigan-based 3rd Coast Genetics calls itself "the swank of dank." As purveyors of some of Michigan's finest cannabis, 3rd Coast Genetics focuses on the strange and the unique. The team behind 3rd Coast Genetics are the creators of Smorez, Butterfingaz, and many other strains that are sought after in the Midwest. 3rd Coast Genetics cultivar names will grab your attention, and they'll stand out from the typical strains that you see every day.

"I am the creative force behind 3rd Coast Genetics," Max Yields tells *High Times*. "The 3rd Coast is the shore of beautiful Lake Michigan—the place where I call home."

Yields is the creator of Oreoz, Pure Michigan, Tagalonz, and many other strains, armed with a passion for breeding and love for pushing the boundaries of quality. "3rd Coast" generally refers to the Great Lakes area in the Midwest. It's too easy to ignore the fire that comes out of Michigan when it's overshadowed by countless other brands.

Some of these rare finds include crosses like Walfredo (MAC 1 x Peanut Butter Breath) or Thick Strawberry Goo (Red Pop x Pure Michigan) with 10 beans per bag.

Some other strains that caught our attention—with a little help from the creative names—were Spock's Brain (Grease Monkey x Peanut Butter Breath) and Wolverine (Animal Cookies x Pure Michigan). But don't get distracted by the names, because 3rd Coast Genetics retains the quality you want, preserving those subtle traits.

"I feel the most important thing that I do, the one thing at the epicenter of all of my hard work, is the practice of selecting unique and amazing traits," Yields says. "Everything is dependent upon genetics and being able to recognize the component that makes something so special or unique, even if those traits are subtle."—BA

► **Pure Options/Pro Gro**

What makes Pure Options unique? Perhaps it's the company's connection to the local community in Michigan. "Our success ultimately is deeply rooted in our community here in Lansing," says Pure Options Director of Pro Gro, Jacob Nelson.

Pure Options has been in operations since 2011 and has become a staple source of craft cannabis in Michigan. One of the team's long-term goals has been to make it into the spotlight and operate a craft cannabis business at a larger scale.

"We built our foundation as a very small team operating in the traditional market taking great caution to keep our heads down and stay focused on this mission," Nelson says. "It was during this time that we built our culture in preparation for our future. So, when people ask us what makes Pure Options unique our answer is always the same, it's our team and it's culture."

Pure Options' uniqueness isn't defined by any particular special process or "secret sauce." The entire team Pure Options are students of cultivation. Small details matter, and cutting corners for profit is never an option, Nelson says. Every day is an opportunity to learn, refine processes, and improve the final product. This mindset is fueled by passion for the plant.

"Thankfully for us our love for the craft and attention to detail hasn't gone unnoticed," Nelson says. "Our team's passion and culture has helped us deliver high quality cannabis to the Michigan market at scale and along the way we've been able to secure some amazing partnerships by proxy."

Some of Pure Options' partnerships include collaborations with Archive Seed Bank, DEO Farms, Wizard Trees, and Skunk House Genetics. This has given the team the opportunity to raise their platform with exclusive strains from some of the best breeders in the industry.

"The entire Pure Options team is excited for what the future holds," Nelson says. "We cannot wait to operate on the national stage next and are thankful for everyone who has helped reach our goals along the way. It was all a dream, and team work truly does make the dream work."—BA

► **Aeriz**

Aeriz, pronounced like "arise," is the producer of aeroponically grown flower, as well as full-spectrum hash oil, sugar, diamonds and sauce, budder, and many other products. They are "the largest aeroponic cannabis cultivator in the world," according to their website. The company probably



TROPICAL COOKIES GROWN AND WASHED BY HELIOS HASH

focuses on root health more than most typical producers.

Roots are misted in Aeriz's custom-fitted tables, where cultivators have full control over nutrient uptake. The closed-loop system helps the team to minimize nutrient waste. While it's a system that would cause a novice grower to most likely fail, the team at Aeriz have perfected the practice.

"We grow aeroponically, for basically two main reasons," Aeriz Senior Producer Ian Krass tells *High Times*. "One is the quality of the flower. And the second is the environment. So the easier thing is the environment, which has an aeroponic growing process."

Krass went on to say that the grow medium is recyclable, and that they're not using any soil, so there's a lot less waste. "Our water nutrient solution that the roots get nested with is recycled in a closed-loop system," he explains. "So, you know, basically, it's the least waste you could possibly generate growing cannabis. And, you know, being environmentally friendly is definitely at the core of our mission."

Aeriz's aeroponically grown flower is sometimes converted into full-spectrum hash oil, distillate, sugar, shatter, budder, and infused honey sticks.

Aeriz is currently partnering with a company called Pachamama, that does carbon offsets. Quality is achieved using a closed loop, computer-controlled nutrient delivery system. The team is very precise in terms of giving the plants exactly "what they need, when they need it."

Aeriz has expanded beyond Illinois with operations in Arizona as well. Be sure to check out their powerful cuts of Jenny Kush (generally accepted as Amnesia Haze and Rare Dankness #2) and Pink Kush (King Kush x King Kush). —BA

► Helios Hash

Helios Hash, a solventless hash producer based out of Maine, rocked the hash world in 2021 with a win at the Ego Clash. The winning entry, a mix of Rainbow Belts with a small amount of Ice Cream Cake, represented a major victory for the family-run brand. After all, they won the well-respected hash event with sungrown plants from their first commercial harvest, and 2022 was only their second season growing.

"It's your classic Zkittlez," Stav Anagnost says of the Ego Clash-winning entry. "It's one of the more sought-after type of terps. We hit it at a good time. A lot of people are growing Rainbow Belts."

Anagnost runs the company alongside two of his brothers, Alex and Demetri, and believes their Rainbow Belts edged out the competition because of their growing style, which he describes as "West Coast."

"We grow sungrown and our entire operation is based off of sustainable regenerative farming," he says. "What we do is we are resin farmers so we strictly grow outdoor plants one time a year, seasonally done for resin and our resin is for hash."

Hash produced from the resin of sungrown flowers is incomparable and is more flavorful than hash made with indoor flowers, Anagnost says. In sunny California, sungrown flower is decidedly more common than in Maine, where the weather is colder and harsher. But Anagnost argues the weather challenges in Maine contribute to the quality of the hash.

"Resin is a defense mechanism to the plant," he explains. "So the more that the plant gets certain stressors in its environment allow the plant to produce a better quality and more luscious resin."

The goal at Helios is always full-melt.

“At the end of the day there’s nothing that can compete with the sun,” Anagnost says. “We’re strictly a hash-based company. Everything we do is sungrown and we believe that’s the best representation of the plant and of the resin.”

Looking ahead, Helios is hoping to start a breeding project. Their hash, only produced once a year, mirrors the successful wine industry model of select year limited releases. —EH

► Kolektor

When it comes to building a brand built on hype, heart, and heat, Kolektor’s got it down. The only things this Bronx-based underground cultivator says he won’t put out is the stuff that you can find everywhere. Don’t look to Kolektor for Gelato or Runtz; he came up in the era of Platinum Girl Scout Cookies and started growing after getting tired of seeing the same old flowers. “I feel like the market is so oversaturated with those things. You can get them anywhere so there’s no point in me growing those cultivars,” he says over a phone call. “Everybody else is doing it and I’m trying to create my own lane.”

Right now, his lane seems wide open as he looks towards licensing and continues to mingle with California cannabis elite heading across the country to explore the burgeoning New York scene. He’s got West Coast growing experience and, through Instagram marketing, has already met a few major players in California cannabis.

“California knows that New York is a bigger market,” Kolektor says. “California has always been at the top of the game in production, and New York has been just buying. So now you have a bunch of local growers popping up, which is really cool.”

When we speak in early fall, Kolektor has just got through the last of other breeders’ genetics and popped 100 seeds of his own to grow out. The male he’s currently working with is a Black Mamba crossed with four different female cultivars. The results are just unnamed crosses for now, Candy Cane x Black Mamba, a Honey Banana x Black Mamba, a Grape Pie x Black Mamba, and an unrevealed fourth. Kolektor’s also creating his own genetics with Purple Taipan (Grape Pie x Black Mamba) pollen and says the hope is that the brand can create a menu “fully curated, bred, and grown by us.” When we connect, he’s just harvested a Sherb Breath, Sunset Sherbert x Mendo Breath.

“It’s super heavy on the Mendo Breath so you get a lot of that like savory terps, almost like a beef soup, beef stew or something, it’s real weird,” he says.

Kolektor grew up in the South Bronx and never thought



HELLA JELLY GROWN BY SOLAR CANNABIS CO.

he’d be able to grow cannabis. Serving in the Army in Afghanistan he saw acres and acres of weed growing in the desert and it hit him that growing it himself might be a possibility. After he got out of the Army, he took some seeds back with him to New York and started experimenting. He’s making plans in terms of gaining official state cultivation licensing and wants to stay close to the Bronx.

“That’s where we can serve the community the best,” he says. “A lot of investors want us to go upstate, but if we go upstate we’re just going to service a bunch of white folks, like our social equity plan will be shit at that point, you know? I’m from the Bronx apartments in Yonkers so we understand how bad the communities have got due to the War on Drugs and the Stop and Frisk era so we want to be able to offer some good opportunities to people in the city that we love.” —EH

► Solar Cannabis Co.

Solar Cannabis Co. grows indoors in its main facility in Somerset, Massachusetts within a 67,000-square-foot space. Its solar production allows the company to operate completely energy independent; solar panels cover the entire facility roof as well as an adjacent 4-acre lot. The cultivator also utilizes two high-efficiency CHP (combined heat and power) generators, making natural gas the only utility that Solar Cannabis Co. is hooked up to. It cycles through 10,000 gallons of water a day, but reclaims 90% of that water to be recirculated back into their fertigation watering system (a process which adds fertilizer into an irrigation system).

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Solar Cannabis Co.'s Director of Marketing and Communications Derek Gould says the company is constantly striving to reduce its energy footprint.

"A lot of these states where you can only cultivate indoors, at least all year round, it's definitely important to take a look at the energy footprint and the carbon footprint that we're leaving, because, it's huge, it's massive, and we really just want to do it the right way," Gould says. "We want to do it upfront, and be a model for other operators, whether current or upcoming, to take a look and identify that, hey, we have a corporate responsibility to operate in a sustainable way."

Solar Cannabis Co. is a vertically integrated company, but they also grow vertically to fully take advantage of their facility space. Cannabis plants are cared for on a three-tier rack system, allowing Solar Cannabis Co. to house anywhere between 2,200 to 2,400 plants per room.

"The way that we have designed our facility is for constant production, we are harvesting a room every week-and-a-half and we're pulling down. I would say close to 350 to 400 pounds of dried flower per room every one-and-a-half to two weeks. So, you know, we are constantly in mass production," Gould explains.

Solar Cannabis Co.'s Vice President of Cultivation Brendan Delaney has a background in cultivation in Trinity County, California and has helped make connections with West Coast cultivators like Compound Genetics and Humboldt Seed Company. A few of their current best sellers are recognizable cultivars like Cherry Punch, Gas Truffle, Hella Jelly, Jelly Runtz, Pink Certz, The Bling, Waffle Cone, and Wedding Cake.

"What we've brought from the West Coast here to the East Coast, they've been game changers, everything's been home runs, for the most part," says Gould.

In Massachusetts, vertically integrated cannabis companies are limited to having three retail licenses, and with Solar Cannabis Co. having two in operation and one coming soon to Dartmouth, the brand is expanding its ethos into other markets and holds a retail-only dispensary license in Rhode Island. —AK

► Good Green

Using cannabis as a way to support Black and brown communities that have been disproportionately affected by the War on Drugs is a worthwhile commitment. Good Green (owned by Green Thumb Industries) strives to sell affordable cannabis flower while also providing funds to worthy nonprofit organizations.

Split between sativa, hybrid, and indica offerings, Good Green is in several markets: Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

Earlier this year, Green Thumb Industries was one of seven multi-state operators to participate in New Jersey's first day of recreational sales which began on April 21. As a vertically integrated company, Green Thumb has its own grow facility in New Jersey that supplies an "ever-growing portfolio of strains." Strains like Banana Cream, Animal Face, L'Orange, Jack Herer, and Rebel Sour are a handful of popular strains in New Jersey.

Good Green isn't just a flower producer though, it also offers its Good Green grant program to help support worthy nonprofit organizations (hence the brand motto "Green that does Good"). There are currently eight nonprofits that have been chosen to receive the Good Green grant, based in various locations such as Illinois, New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

Jai Kensey, director of social impact at Green Thumb Industries, explains why it's so important that cannabis brands give back to the community.

"It's an obligation and I always say as multi-state operators, it's our duty to give back to the communities," Kensey says. "This industry has been built on the backs of Black and brown people, and who have been the most harmed by it. Black people are four times more likely to be arrested for cannabis use. And so it's definitely something where I say it's very unique for our industry, where it should be part of every bit of our operation in terms of giving back to the communities that have been impacted by it."

With an extensive, thorough, and rigorous review process, Kensey, along with Social Impact Program Manager Alyssa Estrada and the Good Green brand team, sift through many applicants and score them based on a number of factors. They closely examine each one, scoring them fairly based on three areas: expungement, employment, and education, as well as geographical location and the organization's financial records to ensure that their funds go toward various programs.

When *High Times* spoke with Kensey, she shared that they were currently in the process of reviewing over 70 applications for the third round with the intention of choosing four, which will receive a split of \$200,000 which was slated to be announced in November 2022. This amount helped the brand meet its goal of granting a total of \$1.3 million to nonprofits by the end of the year. —AK 



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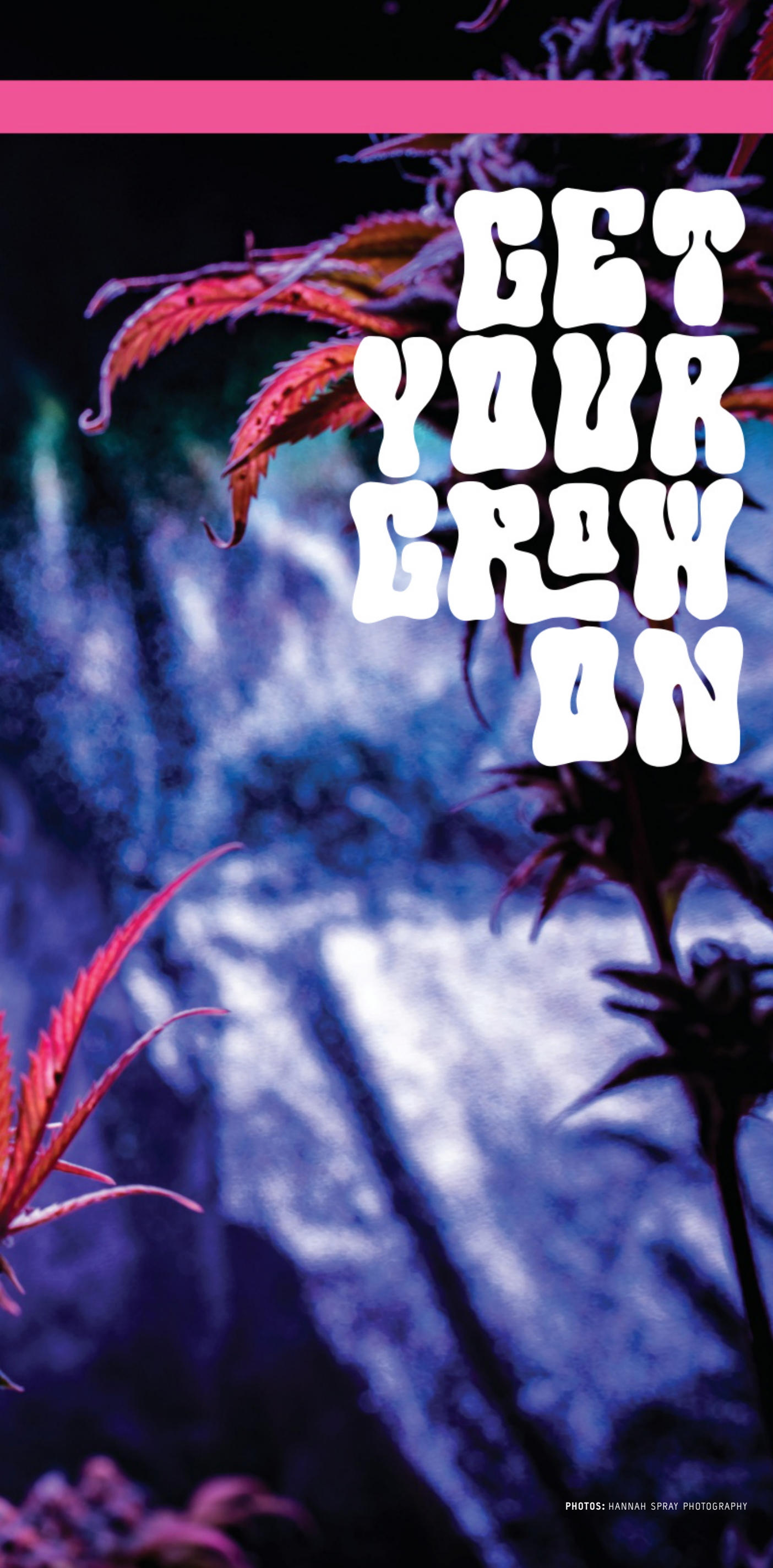
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GET YOUR GROW ON

Starting an indoor cannabis garden.

By A.J. Herrington

With marijuana policy reform continuing to take hold in the United States, more and more people are getting hip to an open secret in the cannabis community: There's nothing like growing your own weed. A recent report from New Frontier Data estimated that approximately three million home cultivators would produce about 11 million pounds of dried cannabis flower in 2022 and projected the total to grow to 15 million pounds of weed in 2030. The report, the first of its kind, found that states with fully legal markets had the highest home cultivation participation rate (7%), followed by medical (5%) and illicit (4%) markets, suggesting that as legalization efforts continue to succeed across the country, more adults will take up home growing for the first time. Retail spending on supplies purchased for home gardens could reach nearly \$4 billion by the end of the decade.

Growing your own cannabis is not a complex undertaking, and the benefits can be quite rewarding. You'll free yourself from the high taxes of legal weed and the uncertainties of the illicit market while greatly expanding the menu of strains to choose from. And at harvest time, knowing you've nurtured the herb you're smoking from seed to your bong is a satisfying and empowering experience. >>

WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO START AN INDOOR CANNABIS GARDEN

If you have the space and climate to grow plants outside without getting busted or ripped off, do it. Your plants will love the natural sun, your wallet will notice the cost savings, and you'll be doing the environment a big favor. But the realities of legalization, continued prohibition, and practical considerations particular to growing herb will lead most home growers to choose an indoor garden. Getting started does not take a lot of time and effort, and with a somewhat modest investment, you can have plants growing in a matter of days, with your first harvest only about three to four months away.

Grow Tent

For the novice cannabis gardener, a grow tent is the way to go. Most varieties of weed require 12 or more hours of complete darkness each day to flower successfully, and grow tents are the best way to ensure no extraneous light hits the plants. Choose a tent made from heavy canvas with a sturdy frame, plenty of ports for cords and ventilation ducts, and several larger flaps to access the plants. Be prepared to spend at least a couple hundred bucks or more; less expensive options are likely to fall apart quickly and cost more in the long run. If you're planning a garden of six plants, a grow tent measuring about 4 feet square and 5 to 7 feet tall should do the trick. Larger and smaller tents are also available to suit different gardeners and space requirements. >>



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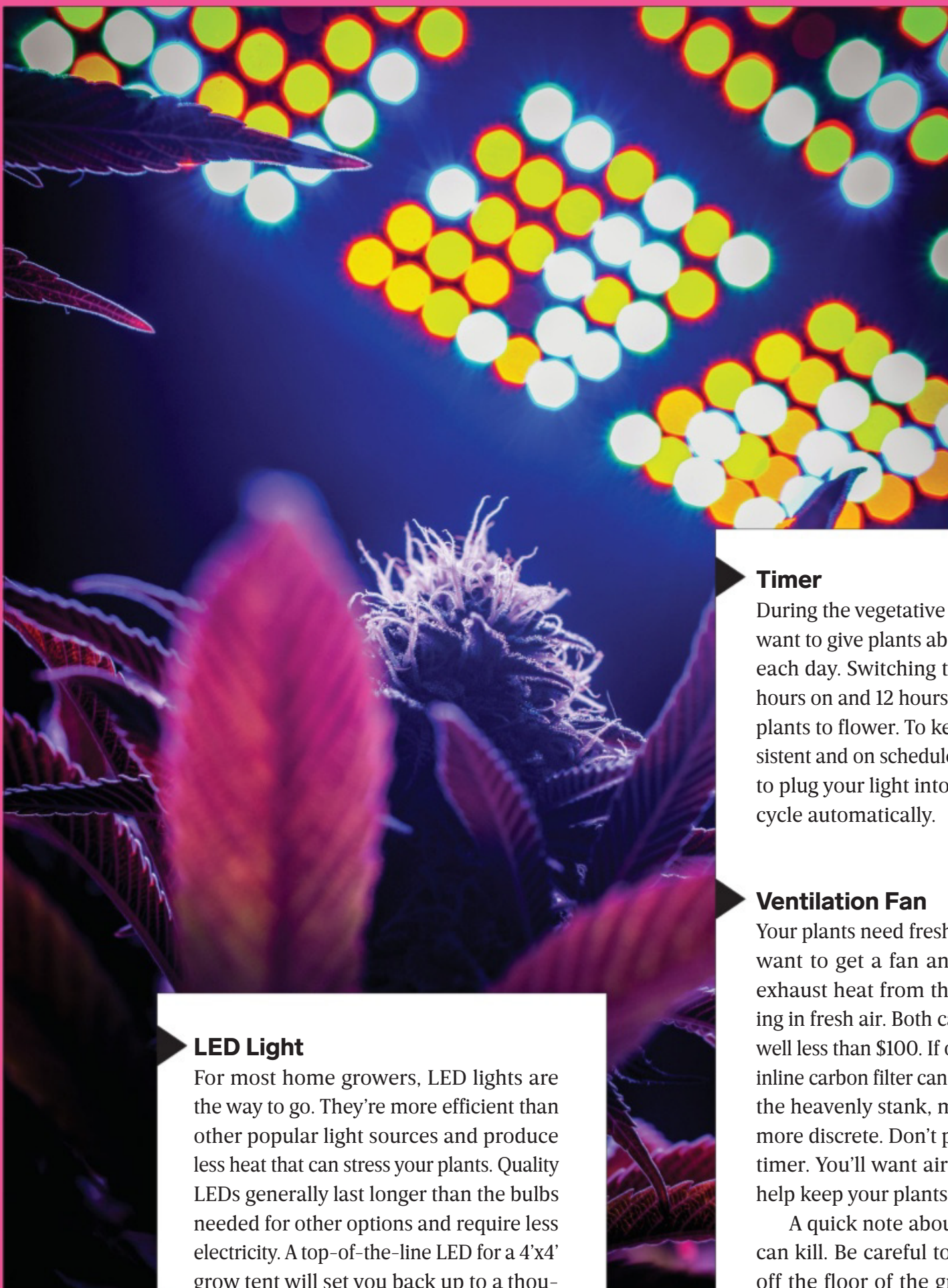
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LED Light

For most home growers, LED lights are the way to go. They're more efficient than other popular light sources and produce less heat that can stress your plants. Quality LEDs generally last longer than the bulbs needed for other options and require less electricity. A top-of-the-line LED for a 4'x4' grow tent will set you back up to a thousand bucks or more, but you can produce quality bud with a more affordable option, too. The best lights allow you to adjust the intensity and sometimes even the spectrum of light, but gardeners on a tighter budget can succeed without all the extra features.

Timer

During the vegetative growth stage, you'll want to give plants about 18 hours of light each day. Switching to a light cycle of 12 hours on and 12 hours off will induce your plants to flower. To keep everything consistent and on schedule, get an outlet timer to plug your light into to control the light cycle automatically.

Ventilation Fan

Your plants need fresh air to live, so you'll want to get a fan and some ducting to exhaust heat from the tent while drawing in fresh air. Both can be purchased for well less than \$100. If odor is a concern, an inline carbon filter can be added to remove the heavenly stank, making your garden more discrete. Don't plug the fan into the timer. You'll want air circulation 24/7 to help keep your plants happy and healthy.

A quick note about safety: Electricity can kill. Be careful to keep power cords off the floor of the grow tent and away from water. Ensure that the combined amperage of your light, fan, and other electrical equipment does not exceed the rated amperage for your timer or the circuit you're plugging into. If in doubt, consult an experienced professional. >>

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Soil

Although other options such as hydroponics and deep-water culture are available for experienced gardeners, growing in soil is more forgiving and the best choice for most beginning gardeners. Don't use dirt from the backyard! It's likely to contain pests and pathogens that can attack your plants and is not optimized for container growing. Instead, choose a light, fast-draining potting mix available at any garden center. If you choose one fortified with nutrients, be careful and judicious about fertilizing for the first several months of growth.

Plant Containers

If you've ever visited a well-stocked garden center, you know there are myriad options to choose from when it comes to containers for growing plants, all with their own features and drawbacks. Old-school clay pots are heavy and allow plants to dry out quicker than plastic. When I started my garden, I went the budget route and used food-grade 5-gallon buckets recycled from restaurants. Fabric pots made from recycled materials are lightweight, and handles mean moving plants around is a snap, making them a favorite of many home gardeners.

Nutrients

Besides light, water and air, your plants need nutrients to grow healthy and produce sticky, potent flowers. Some gardeners prefer to use a soil mix with added nutrients designed to last the entire growing season, but most find supplemental feeding throughout the plant's life cycle will produce better results. Organic and conventional options are available, but starting with a simple two-part or three-part system with different nutrient ratios designed for cannabis will help provide the proper nutrients for the plant's alternate needs during the vegetative and flowering stages. Note that many manufacturers will recommend that you use more nutrients than they need, and your plants will often be happier with less. I use just one-third of the recommended amount.



pH Meter

Although growing cannabis isn't tricky, success depends on following some basic rules. For optimal nutrient uptake, the water you give the plants—with or without nutrients—should have a pH of between 5.8 and 6.5, providing a slightly acidic environment that maximizes nutrient uptake. It's essential to check pH regularly, preferably every time you water, to ensure proper levels. Uncorrected pH can make nutrients unavailable to plants and cause deficiencies that can be difficult to diagnose. Testing strips and reagent test kits to check pH are also available, but a regularly calibrated, good-quality meter is quicker and more accurate.

Pruning Shears

Once the plants are growing, you'll need a pair of sharp garden shears for pruning your plants to keep their shape, keep size in check and maximize flowering. Top-quality shears with metal handles will last the longest and provide years of use. Hand shears are fine for most cannabis branches, but the largest ones and main stems may require a larger pair of loppers. >>



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-2022-

HIGH TIMES

CANNABIS CUP



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2ND PLACE
EDIBLES: GUMMIES



Trimming Scissors

After the plants are harvested, most gardeners opt to manicure their buds, cutting away any extraneous leaf material and retaining the flower. Choose a sharp, lightweight pair of trimming scissors or shears that will be comfortable in your hand for an extended period. With any luck, you'll have a lot of flower to manicure! Spring-loaded handles that open the blades without effort make the work quicker and easier.

Plants

Once the garden infrastructure is assembled, the next step is acquiring plants. In some states with legal weed, you can buy seeds or young plants known as clones at dispensaries. Additionally, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration acknowledged earlier this year that cannabis seeds, even those for high-THC strains, are legal hemp under federal law. As a result, thousands of different varieties of cannabis are available to the home grower from online seed banks.

Grow Guide

No single magazine article can impart everything you need to know about growing cannabis (we

haven't even touched on feminized seeds or autoflower strains, for example). You'll find plenty of tips online, but the more you dig into it, you're likely to find that much of the information available is inconsistent, if not downright conflicting. It's part of the fun of growing weed—just about everybody comes up with their own tricks and techniques. To help make sense of it all, I recommend buying a grow manual from a respected grower and following their advice exclusively for a crop or two until you've gained some experience. I swear by the *Cannabis Grower's Handbook* by the Guru of Ganja, Ed Rosenthal, and cherish my dog-eared, signed copy, but guides from other well-known writers, including Jorge Cervantes, Danny Danko, and others won't steer you astray. Once you've successfully brought a few crops to harvest, you can start branching out into different methods and techniques.

Grow To It!

After gathering your tools and supplies and assembling your grow tent, you're ready to cultivate your own cannabis. Before long, you'll be part of a community of home growers responsible for growing 11 million pounds of herb in the U.S. this year alone. **HT**



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PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

**JUST BECAUSE YOU
DON'T KNOW REGGIE
WATTS IS HIGH, DOESN'T
MEAN HE ISN'T.**



by Ali Lerman

Musician, singer, actor, comedian, and beatbox extraordinaire, Reggie Watts has layers like an onion. If onions ate edibles, that is.

Born in Germany and raised in Montana, Watts's love affair with cannabis started with the finest schwag a teenager's money could buy. Thankfully, that crispy weed didn't hinder him as he stayed on a path that led him to learning all of the benefits the cannabis plant has to offer.

Somehow he always gives the audience exactly what they want—not even Watts knows what he's planning, from a TED Talk and comedy specials to his tones and beats on *Comedy Bang! Bang!*. His gift comes naturally and what a gift it is.

Edibles have also been a gift to him, not just to reduce stress and anxiety, but as a muse as well. He even takes his love for cannabis steps further, advocating far and wide in loopy improvised musical odes to 4/20 on *The Late Late Show with James Corden* where he serves as the leader of the show's band, called Melissa.

We talked to Watts about practicing proper dosage, vibes over terps, and an “edible game” he plays when alone with himself. (Get your minds out of the gutter.) >>



High Times: What was the weed like growing up in Montana?

Reggie Watts: Oh man, I mean, it was *very* schwaggy. It was very brown with seeds in it, but we would get really fucked up! I don't remember its efficiency, I didn't know anything about that then, but we were high. I guess it came from Mexico? That's what everyone always said, "It came from Mexico." Who even knows if it was true.

Do you remember where you got it back then?

I like that question because it's like you're trying to score some.

Yeah so, where'd you get that dirt weed from? Can I get that number like, pssst... Reggie sent me?

So yeah, is there an email I get? A number I can hit up? I need some schwag! You know, I don't know where we got it from back then. It was always my friend that procured it, and I had no idea where he got it. Ok actually, there was one time when I knew where we got it. I had broken into a small pickup truck and behind the seat, there was a huge brown paper bag full of weed. We ended up selling that in the summer, but we kept a bunch too. So that's where we got some of our weed, but the rest of it my friend Beav got that was probably just from some guy. Maybe he got it from Mexico.

What's the craziest thing you've MacGyvered to smoke pot out of?

Wow, what would that have been? Oh, you know what? This one was a pretty good one. I had this wood coffee table that I got from a thrift store when I was furnishing my first place in Seattle. My friend was a woodworker so, we decided to make one of the corners of the table into a pipe. So, we carved out a bowl and then drilled a hole in the corner so you had to just like, get down on your knees, put some weed on top of the table in the bowl, and draw from the corner of the table. You know what? It worked!

That's the most random thing I've ever heard. Now that you're a vet in the game, do you have a favorite strain?

My favorite stuff comes from my friend Dave. He's in a band and grows the most amazing weed. It's incredible because it's grown biodynamically and it just has this really chill, fun, and awesome feeling to it. That's my favorite. I'm not really a connoisseur when it comes to strains and things like that because for me it's like, is it weed? OK, lemme get high off of it. I'm not really like, well the terpenes are like... yeah, I have no idea.

That's so funny because every weed store is like, this is great because of the percent of terps and I'm like, "Let me stop you. I'll take a sativa. Preferably something fruity."

Yeah! What gets me high? What's a good vibe? For me it's about the vibe. When someone is like, this is great for being creative... yeah good, let's get high. That is all I need and I'm happy. I also try to stick to edibles because smoking does kind of fuck with my throat. >>

BERRY BURST INDICA GUMMIES:
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 **NGW**

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Ahhh yes. I recall a space cake story you told on *A Little Late with Lilly Singh*. Have you given space cakes another go or was that it for you?

Of course! I'm not one of those people who give up or have a crazy experience like, "oh I'm never going to do that on stage again." Of course I'm going to do that on stage again. The one thing I dislike is that every single person I run into when I offer them an edible is like, "I don't know mannnn, I just can't, it makes me all urghhhh." I just feel like, you have to keep trying. You have to practice, know your amounts, and pick a brand that is consistent. People just give up so easily and weed has so many benefits. Don't pass on it!

my composure? A lot of people don't know I'm high on an edible, or on anything. I have some weird ability to tap into normalcy and I can get into a pragmatic mindset. I just kind of do it as a practice because you know, when shit goes down, I don't wanna be freaking out! I want to go into problem solving rather than being all, "AHHHHH!!!!"

I think you need to sell portions of your brain to other people. We all need a little Watts brain, please.

Yeah, I should do that. I need to create a method. The Watts method! **HT**

 [instagram.com/reggiewatts](https://www.instagram.com/reggiewatts)

"WHAT GETS ME HIGH? WHAT'S A GOOD VIBE? FOR ME IT'S ABOUT THE VIBE. WHEN SOMEONE IS LIKE, THIS IS GREAT FOR BEING CREATIVE... YEAH GOOD, LET'S GET HIGH. THAT IS ALL I NEED AND I'M HAPPY." - REGGIE WATTS

I hate to be part of the problem, but I once ate 25 mg, couldn't move for 12 hours, and I had shit to do.

I don't think anyone is a pussy for not taking them. And if you took too much, you took too much. I can't just be like, "SUCK IT UP!" There are tricks you can do to calm yourself down and get through it, but it's not really about that. It's about how that was too much, so next time, you'll do 4 mg or 2.5 mg. People get afraid of edibles and they're so scienced out now and have all different kinds of doses from low to high. And their levels are insanely accurate, which makes them awesome products. I think edibles have a big advantage and I think they're very helpful.

OK you win! I'll give them another go. What's your favorite thing to do when you're all high and such?

All stizzy? That wasn't sponsored. I enjoy the classics like video games and watching a really amazing show of any kind, mainly science fiction. Those things I really love. Something else I really love is, I just recently got ahold of some Level pills that are 100 mg each. I'll take a high dose, like 100 mg, and then just try to complete technical tasks. Firmware updates or organizing a drawer or something like that. I love stuff like that because it's basically me trying to batten down the hatches on a ship that's in the middle of a hurricane, you know? It's a mental exercise or a creative challenge. Can I maintain



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1 UNRELEASED CEREAL MILK PACK - 5 STICKERS
2 FREEBIES - 1 READY BOY SATCHEL - 1 HAT
1 - STIMMY BOBBLEHEAD - 2 POSTERS
STIMULATOR MEMBERSHIP

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D.I.Y. EDIBLES ESSENTIALS

“I want to challenge people to rethink that we can make cannabutter and edibles at very low doses, it doesn’t have to be all super high dose.”
- Christina Wong

Culinary edibles advice for beginners with **Christina Wong**, founder of Fruit + Flower Co.

by Ashley Kern

CHRISTINA WONG IS A CULINARY CANNABIS EDUCATOR, RECIPE creator, and self-described “baked baker” whose expertise making her own edibles has garnered widespread attention throughout the industry. From beautifully decorated shortbread desserts, elaborate cakes, and a wide variety of other delicious creations, Wong frequently celebrates the intersection between culinary art and cannabis.

Through her creative media company Fruit + Flower Co., Wong teaches others how to properly understand the process of making their own edibles by demystifying the terminology, reviewing the methods of infusion, discussing correct dosing, and providing numerous recipes to put all the learning into practice. *High Times* took a moment to chat with Wong about tips for beginners, which infusion methods are best, and what’s trending in the edibles scene. >>

The Art of the Home Edible

...

To Wong, food and cannabis are a perfect combination.

“If you like cannabis, you love food, because the best thing in the whole world is to get high and eat,” she says.

Despite this, many people miss out on the enjoyment of homemade edibles because cooking with cannabis can be intimidating.

“When I first started looking [for information], there was this mystique and mystery to making edibles,” Wong says. “For me, there was definitely a fear of messing up or making it too potent, getting too high, or giving something to somebody that gets them too high. I want to challenge people to rethink that we can make cannabutter and edibles at very low doses, it doesn’t have to be all super high dose.”

Buying edibles at the dispensary is convenient, but it can be cost prohibitive, she says.

“I think that cannabis is such an important plant medicine that the more people know how to cook and bake at home so that they can give themselves and their loved ones medicine, the better.”

Understanding Infusion

...

Wong shares that one of the most primary essentials to creating edibles is understanding proper dosing. Instead of decarbing flower and infusing a fat like cannabutter she recommends beginners try adding an oil-based tincture in which the THC dosing is already measured. Once confidence is established, home cooks can start to learn how to decarboxylate their flowers or trim. All of the recipes Wong posts online use whole flower infused with either cannabis-infused butter or

oil, and include directions to dose at 5 mg per serving or less.

For first timers, Wong recommends going for an easy decarboxylation method: Mason jars in an oven.

“Everyone has a Mason jar, everyone has an oven, and it’s foolproof,” she explains. “It’s smell proof. There’s less smell. And even if it’s not the most efficient way of getting all of the cannabinoids to convert and to infuse, at least that’s the place to start. And then they can get their confidence, and then try something new.”

Wong explains in more detail on Fruit + Flower Co. that her usual process to decarb cannabis includes placing cannabis flower in a pint-sized Mason jar and sealing the jar with a lid. After setting the oven to 240 degrees Fahrenheit, she heats the cannabis an hour, shaking the jar every 20 minutes. After it is left to cool, the decarbed cannabis can be infused to a fat such as butter or oil.



Expanding Expertise

...

While Wong has made it her goal to educate and inspire others to learn how to make their own edibles, it is but one facet of her expertise. In the past, Wong worked with brands and organizations to create unique desserts, such as Source Cannabis and Stündenglass. Most recently, she helped an AAPI (Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) the 3rd Annual Mogu Magu party (*Mogu* means mushroom in Chinese, and *Magu* is the name of a Chinese hemp goddess) held in September to celebrate the mid-autumn festival.

Although she recommends using whole flower for beginners, Wong sometimes branches out to use a variety of other types of cannabis ingredients in her more elaborate creations.

“I’ve been experimenting more cooking with concentrates just because I love the pure flavor of that,” she says. “You can get so much flavor and terpene profile and high potency using concentrates.”

Making edibles at home offers unlimited potential, but edibles sold in dispensaries are usually more limited. But recently Wong has noticed an increase in edibles infused with solventless concentrates as well as savory edible offerings.

“I’m seeing more solventless edibles coming out onto the market because I think people are caring more about the quality of not just the ingredients of what goes into their edibles, but also the quality of the cannabis that goes in,” Wong says. “But I think if you are a plant enthusiast, and you want to appreciate all flavors, and everything the plant has to offer, solventless is absolutely the way to go.” **HT**

 fruitandflower.co



“If you like cannabis, you love food, because the best thing in the whole world is to get high and eat.”

- Christina Wong



BROWN BUTTER VANILLA BEAN SHORTBREAD BARS

by Christina Wong

SOFT AND CRUMBLY, THESE LUSCIOUS BROWNED BUTTER AND VANILLA SHORTBREAD bars are glazed with a creamy vanilla bean icing. Infused with 10 mg of cannabis each, strains such as Wedding Cake and Biscotti with doughy, creamy aromas, would pair well with the nutty, vanilla notes of this edible.

The showstopper decor is my signature “botanical bandit” style, made with pressed cannabis leaves and organic edible flowers. Inspired by my friend The Velvet Bandit, who spreads positive art through wheatpasting.

BROWN BUTTER VANILLA BEAN SHORTBREAD BARS

Time to Prepare: 55-60 minutes

Makes 20 approximately 3” x 1.5” bars dosed at 10 mg each

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups all-purpose flour

1/3 cup cornstarch

1 1/2 cups cannabutter (200 mg THC total), softened

1 1/4 cup powdered sugar

1 tablespoon choice of milk (whole, oat, hemp, almond)

1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or 1 vanilla bean pod, scraped

1/2 teaspoon salt

Vanilla Glaze:

1 cup powdered sugar

1/4 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or 1 vanilla bean pod, scraped

1/4 cup choice of milk

Other:

Small cannabis fan leaves and edible flowers for decoration, rinsed and pat dry (Optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a medium saucepan, melt the cannabutter over medium high heat until the butter starts bubbling and turns golden brown. Butter browns at 250 degrees F, a low enough temp to prevent cannabinoid and terpene burnoff. Remove from heat to cool to room temp, then refrigerate for 30 minutes to an hour to chill until the butter has solidified from liquid to softened state. Stir occasionally. Can be made ahead and stored until ready to use.

2. Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Line a 13x9x2-inch baking pan with parchment paper. In a small bowl, stir together flour and cornstarch. Set aside.

3. In a large bowl, beat together softened cannabutter, powdered sugar until creamed and fluffy. Beat in 1 tablespoon milk, vanilla bean, and salt on medium speed until combined.

4. Slowly stir in the flour and cornstarch mixture a little at a time until combined. Continue beating until a crumbly dough comes together. It should feel like crumbly soft sand that holds together. Press together and make sure any crumbly flour bits are mixed thoroughly into the dough. If the dough is too dry and crumbly and not holding together, drizzle and mix in a little more milk until the dough can press and hold together.

5. Press the dough evenly into the prepared baking pan. Place into the oven and bake on the center rack for 40 minutes. Turn the pan halfway through baking to bake evenly until slightly golden brown on the edges. Remove pan from oven and place onto a rack to cool.

6. Make the Vanilla Glaze: In a small bowl, mix 1 cup of powdered sugar with milk and vanilla bean until you get a smooth, thin, runny glaze that just coats the back of a spoon with a thin film. If it's too thin, add more powdered sugar a little at a time until you reach desired consistency. Set aside.

7. Glaze + Decorate: Place the small cannabis leaves and edible flowers (optional) each scattered across the top of the cookie. Pour glaze evenly on top of the entire cookie pan and over the cannabis leaves and flowers. Using a small spatula or pastry brush, gently spread to evenly distribute the glaze and coat the decoration. The leaves should look like they're covered with a sheet of ice.

8. Let the cookie and icing cool completely in the pan until the glaze hardens, three or more hours. Using the sides of the parchment paper, lift the uncut cookie out of the pan and onto a cutting board. Using a sharp knife, cut into 20 rectangles. Store covered in a cool, dry place.



**STICK FIGURE
TOPS THE
CHARTS**
p. 120



**NEVADA SELLS
\$965M IN
CANNABIS**
p. 124



ADELANTO AIMS TO BECOME CANNABIS ‘MECCA’

Adelanto Mayor Gabriel Reyes explains how the city is taking advantage of cannabis while others ignore it.

by Benjamin M. Adams

A SMALL SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TOWN HAS UNDERGONE A SWIFT transformation over the past several years as it continues to position itself as a center of cannabis commerce.

Adelanto houses around 3,400 incarcerated or detained prisoners at three private, county, and federal prison complexes within Adelanto’s city limits. But lately, the city is rebranding itself as a cannabis-friendly town including nearly every type of weed-based business.

Adelanto, meaning “advance” in Spanish, sits atop the high desert area in San Bernardino County, California, and is a quiet desert town with only just over 30,000 residents. It’s one of the last places in California where you’d expect cannabis events and business to thrive.

But the city is pushing for that reality. Adelanto also became the second city in Southern California to allow legalized, large-scale cultivation of medical cannabis in 2015, a year after Desert Hot Springs. It’s the only city in Victor Valley municipality to allow storefront cannabis dispensaries and other types of businesses

after California voted to approve adult use in 2016.

Because Adelanto embraced cannabis early on during California’s maturing market, Ky-Mani Marley, B-Real of Cypress Hill, and Tommy Chong all expressed interest in obtaining permits in Adelanto shortly after adult use sales took off. Even Elon Musk set up operations in Adelanto due to the city’s generally lax regulations, however his interests were involved in tunneling in the dirt.

The city also hosts many cannabis events. On Feb. 5, 2019, the Adelanto City Council voted to allow cannabis events inside Adelanto Stadium, one of the city’s main economic drivers.

While Adelanto already hosted medical cannabis events such as Kushstock, *High Times Magazine* hosted the first adult-use cannabis event ever in the city, which was the Dope Cup, held on March 23 and 24, 2019, in association with *Dope Magazine*. It attracted artists such as Waka Flocka Flame, Soulja Boy, and Mike G.

Dope Cup was a social experiment in and of itself as it tested the boundaries of California’s relatively new adult-use parameters, and that was thanks to Adelanto’s lenient approach to cannabis consumption events.

“What we’ve done here in Adelanto is we have created an atmosphere that’s truly consumer-friendly, where anyone can come—as long as it’s properly regulated through the state of California—and distribute, sell, enjoy, consume it just like any other product,” says Adelanto Mayor Gabriel Reyes. >>

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK



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Eventually other events followed *High Times* and *Dope Magazine*, such as the Burning Treez festival last July, featuring artists such as Rick Ross and Busta Rhymes. There, brands such as CAM Cannabis and Heavenly Edibles provided sample bags for all of the artists in the VIP tent area, as Too \$hort and Xzibit chowed down on infused treats such as Heavenly's lemon buddies—a tasty spin on muddy buddies, which is a Chex-like cereal dipped in chocolate or peanut butter and dusted with powdered sugar. Also in the VIP tent area, Mayor Reyes mingled with the crowd in full participation.

“We have, I would say, probably 50 plus different types of vendors that are in the cannabis industry that we have embraced to allow them to come here, market, and sell X, Y, and Z,” Reyes says.

Cultivation operations are also thriving in Adelanto—sometimes at a massive scale. Israel-based Tikun Olam, Hebrew for “repair the world,” settled on Adelanto for its U.S. operations and opened a 14-acre indoor grow in 2019.

Tikun Olam's Adelanto operations became so big that workers there unionized.

“Our goal in the city is to become the mecca of cannabis. And I’m gonna continue to live by that statement, because you have to speak it into existence.”

- Adelanto Mayor Gabriel Reyes

In 2021, growers at Tikun Olam's organized to join the Teamsters Union, thus making themselves the first unionized cannabis grow workforce in Southern California. Also that year, California Teamsters allotted \$1.5 million to support legislative efforts to improve cannabis workforce issues and cannabis reform.

Mayor Reyes says that the city's leniency with cannabis is all planned and that the goal is to continue doing so.

“One of the things that I love about the City of Adelanto is we're one of the first cities—if not the first city—to fully go seed-to-sale in the state,” Reyes says. “So we're just following that model and allowing the entertainment to happen. We actually have the last drive-thru dispensary license that was issued before those were stopped.”

The city has also seen its share of controversies due to its incessant push into cannabis, and is in need of a rebrand. Former city councilmember and mayor pro tem Jermaine Wright, for instance, was found guilty of accepting a \$10,000 bribe from an FBI agent posing as a cannabis business applicant, and other charges. This comes after a long history in the city of off-and-on corruption.

This is why leaders like Reyes are keeping busy cleaning up the city's image. The city leadership plans on continuing its push for cannabis commerce.

“Our goal in the city is to become the mecca of cannabis,” Reyes says. “And I’m gonna continue to live by that statement, because you have to speak it into existence. Like I said earlier. Now that it is state-legal and soon to be federally legal, the mecca will be out of Adelanto.” 

HIGH FIVE

FIVE PLANTS & FUNGI WITH CANNABIS-LIKE COMPOUNDS

Forget cannabis—here are five other plant and fungi varieties that have similar beneficial compounds.

by Benjamin M. Adams

1 

LIVERWORT

Several species of the mossy-like plant liverwort contain perrottetinene (PET), a THC-like compound discovered in 1994 by Japanese chemist Yoshinori Asakawa. PET's chemical structure is very similar to THC, making it bind to some of the same endocannabinoid receptors. Anecdotal reports suggest that the psychoactive effects of PET from liverwort are weak at best producing a mild hypnotic high. Therapeutic interest in PET continues to grow as early evidence suggests it has anti-inflammatory effects. As about 500 varieties of liverwort are endemic to New Zealand, there is some evidence to suggest that the plant may have been used as herbal medicine by the Māori.

3 

FRENCH BLACK TRUFFLES

Périgord truffle or French black truffle is one of the most expensive shrooms in the world. Popular in France, truffle hogs are trained to sniff and locate these underground, as they contain androstenol, a pheromone that “turns on” the pigs. They're also rich in anandamide—an endocannabinoid also found in our own bodies and in animals. In the past, black truffles were used as medicine in the Middle East and Africa for skin and eye conditions, and anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antibacterial properties. Also look for anandamide in raw cacao!

3 

SOUTH AFRICAN SUNFLOWER

Certain South African sunflowers contain cannabis-like compounds. The *Helichrysum* genus consists of at least 600 varieties of sunflowers which are rich in at least two CBG-like cannabinoids and their acidic precursor CBGA, notably the *Helichrysum umbraculigerum* species. *Helichrysum* sunflower varieties are believed to provide antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory benefits. These varieties also share many of the same terpenes as cannabis which may add to the plant's benefits. Other plants also contain similar CBG-like cannabinoids such as licorice or bastard indigo.

4 

FLAX

Flax contains traces of an active CBD-like compound. While little is known about this compound, it was demonstrated to influence immunological response and provide anti-inflammatory benefits. Like hemp seeds, flaxseed is also rich in fiber, omega-3 fatty acids, and is a very high quality protein. Flaxseed oil and hemp oil are frequently combined for added benefits.

5 

ELECTRIC DAISY

The electric daisy produces flowers that contain spilanthal, an anesthetic that causes a numbing sensation when the flowers are chewed. Traditionally, these flowers are a remedy for a toothache, which is why the plant is sometimes called “the toothache plant” and used for both pain and gum inflammation. Electric daisy was peddled in 19th century America as a toothache remedy in tinctures. It has other uses in folk medicine too; The Asháninka people of Peru, for instance, used it to treat diarrhea, and Amazonians used it as a cough suppressant. Electric daisies are rich in chemicals which bind to the CB2 receptor, suggesting they may have some kind of effect on the immune system as well.

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TOPPING THE REGGAE CHARTS

American band Stick Figure released their seventh studio album *Wisdom* on Sept. 9. *Wisdom* topped the iTunes Reggae Albums chart, and the album debuted on the spot atop the *Billboard* Reggae Albums Chart—a spot that is normally occupied by Bob Marley and the Wailers’s collection *Legend*. *Wisdom* was written, produced, and recorded almost entirely by vocalist Scott Woodruff. On tour, he’s joined by drummer Kevin Offitzer, bassist Tommy Suliman, guitarist Johnny Cosmic, percussionist Will Phillips, and KBong (real name Kevin Bong) who also has a successful solo career. The new album was boosted by frequently sold out tours and energetic performances at Cali Vibes and Cali Roots. The album was recorded at Great Stone Studios in Oakland, California—former home of Green Day—featuring guests Slightly Stoopid, Barrington Levy, and Collie Buddz. “*Wisdom* is all about the journey. I wanted to give people an album that makes them feel good and resonates with whatever they’re going through in their lives and hopefully reminds them that there is beauty and joy in the midst of all the craziness,” Woodruff told *High Times*. Cannabis is typically part of the picture; Stick Figure is behind Stick Figure Sour, based on one of Woodruff’s favorite strains, Sour Diesel, which debuted at The Emerald Cup in 2016, and involved a partnership with Humboldt’s Finest.



WEED WORKS
FOR ME!

STRIKE A POSE



Seth Rogen recently spoke to *Vogue* in an interview published on Sept. 28 and he talked about how he stays busy, his passion for pottery, keeping his wife and family close, and of course, smoking weed. “Smoking weed is so culturally acceptable now, thank God, in most of the country, not enough of it, but most of it,” Rogen said in the interview, adding that he’s from Vancouver and he’s been smoking cannabis since he was 13 years old. Now, cannabis is an essential part of his routine, and one that he told *Vogue* he can’t live without. “Now, I just smoke weed all day, every day and I love it. And thank God it’s out there because it seems to be what I need. I know weed works for me. You’ll have a very hard time getting me to go somewhere I can’t smoke weed at this point in my life because it doesn’t seem reasonable to me.” Additionally, on Oct. 1 Rogen attended the 10th Annual Hilarity for Charity event (a charity organization co-founded by Rogen and his wife, Lauren Miller, to support families impacted by Alzheimer’s disease) which the couple described as “kicking Alzheimer’s in the ballzheimers.” While being interviewed there, Rogen admitted that he wants to smoke weed with Barbara Streisand—who doesn’t? The following week, the organization stated that it had collected over \$877,000 during the charity event.

PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK, GABE OVIATWE



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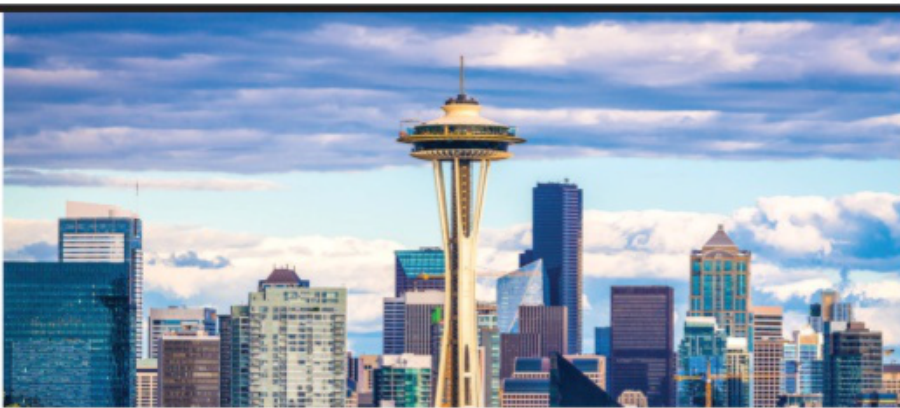


SUPPORT FOR PANAMA PATIENTS

In August 2021, the National Assembly of Panama unanimously voted 44 to 0 to approve Law 242, which would regulate medical cannabis. The bill required a final signature from Republic of Panama President Laurentino Cortizo, who finally signed Law 242 exactly one year later on Aug. 31, 2022. “I signed the Executive Decree that regulates Law 242 of 2021, which regulates the medicinal and therapeutic use of cannabis and its derivatives; one of the strongest regulations at the regional level, to allow the consumption of processed cannabis and provide relief to thousands of patients,” Cortizo wrote on Twitter in a translation. Law 242 regulates cannabis for therapeutic, medical, and veterinary purposes, as well as use for “scientists and research.” Cortizo also issued another decree that creates the National Directorate for the Monitoring of Activities Related to Medicinal Cannabis “for the control, surveillance and supervision of the implementation of Law 242 of 2021.” In a press release, Cortizo expressed his confidence in the success of Panama’s new medical cannabis law. “Panama has one of the strongest regulations at the regional level for the use of cannabis for medicinal and therapeutic purposes, and thus provide relief to thousands of patients who have waited for this solution for long years,” Cortizo said.

WHAT’S THE DEAL, EH?

A report published by *MJBizDaily* on Sept. 20 found that the most profitable cannabis businesses in Canada are owned by the government. The research cites actual or forecasted net income from most recent reports provided by government-owned cannabis companies. In first place comes the fiscal projection of the Ontario Cannabis Store (OCS), which expected to collect CA\$262.8 million over a three-year period which ended in March 2022, followed by Société Québécoise Du Cannabis (SQDC), which has collected approximately CA\$168.5 million in net income since legalization began in October 2018. In third is BC Liquor Distribution Branch (LDB), which has earned a net income of CA\$36 million, followed by New Brunswick’s government-owned Cannabis NB, which brought in CA\$31.7 million in net income between “2020–21 through 2021–22.” In total, these four corporations have collected nearly CA\$500 million in net income. The monopoly of these government-owned companies is addressed in the report, bringing up questions about the efficacy of government monopolies in the industry, as opposed to wholesale distribution.



SEATTLE SOCIAL EQUITY

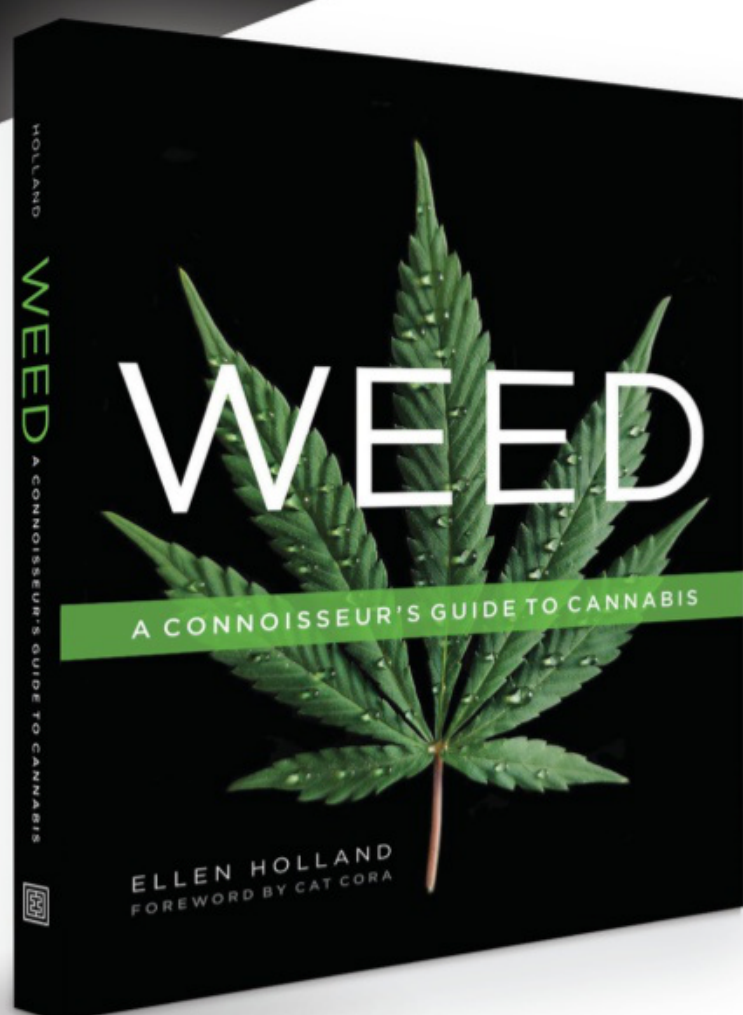
On Sept. 20, Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell signed three new cannabis bills that will help improve social equity in the city. CB 120391 establishes a commitment of plans “for supporting cannabis workers and supporting communities disproportionately harmed by the federal War on Drugs,” while C B120392 creates social equity licensing, and CB 120393 guides creates protections for employees of cannabis business in Seattle. “I am very pleased to see that this joint effort between my office, the Council, FAS [Facilities and Administrative Services] and community stakeholders has resulted in the passage of this suite of bills. This is a first—but necessary—step toward equity long overdue in the cannabis industry,” said Mayor Harrell in a press release. “The work still to come will highlight additional opportunities for improvement in our current system, and I look forward to the recommendations that result from the Cannabis Needs Assessment. This work won’t be easy, but I believe together we can foster an open conversation between workers, community members and industry leaders to identify common priorities and align on efforts to advance our shared values of equity and restoration.” Many have praised this move to support equity, as the initial passing of Initiative 502 in 2012 prevented black business owners from participating in the industry.



EPIC INK

WEED

A Connoisseur's Guide to Cannabis
By Ellen Holland



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SO LONG, BREAST CANCER!

A new study published in the journal *Drug Science, Policy and Law* on Sept. 22 showcased the latest evidence on how cannabis and psychedelic therapy can help treat breast cancer. The peer-reviewed study conducted by Grace and Health Wellness analyzed the case of a 49-year-old Nicole DiMonda, who was originally diagnosed with advanced stage IV of metastatic breast cancer in 2018. Between August 2018–June 2021, the patient consumed daily doses of cannabinoids, including CBC, THC, THCA, and CBG. After beginning her cannabinoid treatment, a CT scan revealed “an observable 50% reduction in breast mass,” which showed continued improvement in numerous follow-up visits as well. Grace and Health Wellness co-founder and Chief Science Officer Jaime Brambila, as well as DiMonda’s husband, are pleased with the results and what it could mean for other breast cancer patients. “Our conclusions are based on Nicole’s overwhelming outcome. We have identified our mission to bring these alternatives to everyone without restriction, and to do so, we must go through the appropriate channels of the drug approval route,” Brambila explained in a press statement. “We still do not have a way to accurately target this physiological system. However, patients cannot wait for the approval. We see the therapeutic potential for patients deciding to safely explore by themselves and sometimes in partnership with their physicians. The good news is that nature may hold the key to the combination of compounds we need to heal, modernizing a new era of better healthcare.”

WUNDERBAR WEED!

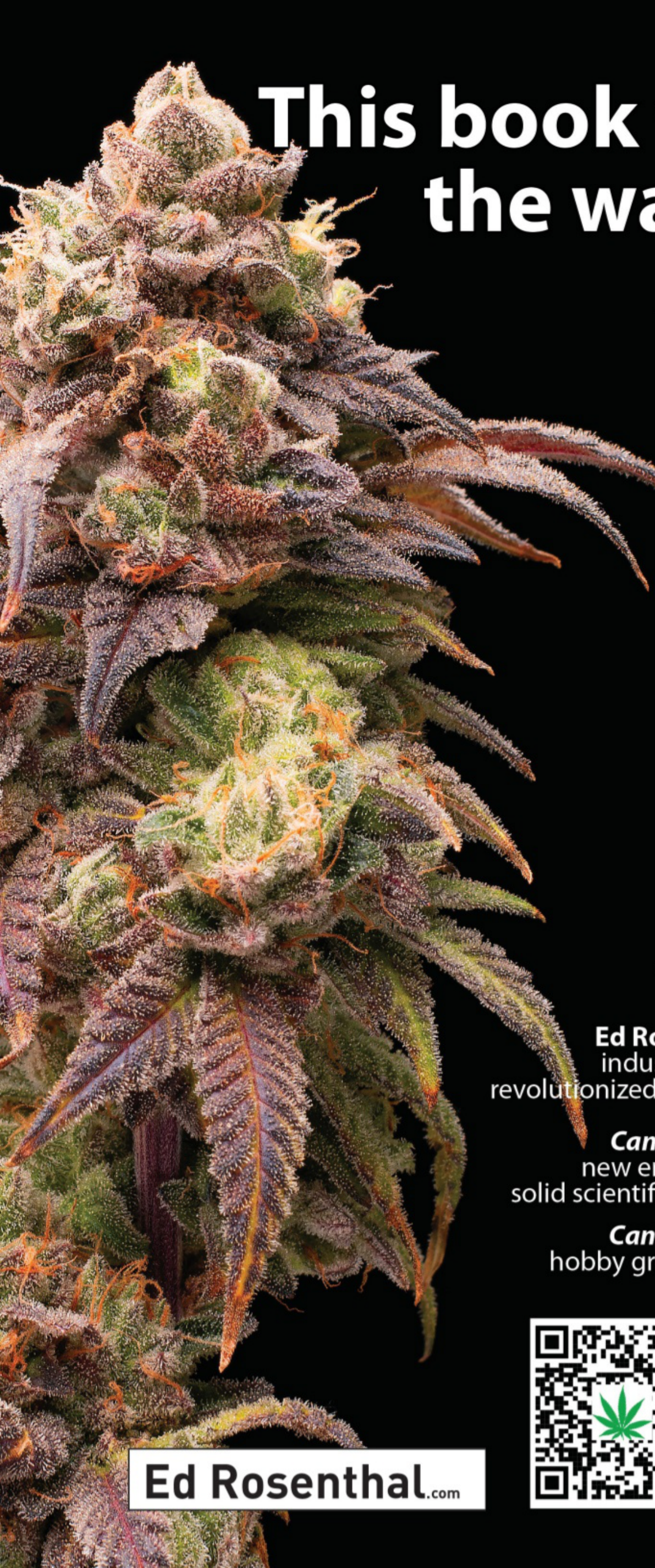
In the past, U.S. state officials as well as officials from other countries have visited dispensaries in California to witness first-hand how to regulate their own respective cannabis laws. On Sept. 19–20 though, health officials from Germany arranged to check out successful California cannabis businesses in order to assess how to approach possible legalization. German Bundestag’s (aka the German federal parliament) Health Committee members were provided with a wealth of information and in-person resources. “The delegation of the Health Committee of the Bundestag continued discussions on lessons learnt from cannabis policy and reform in Oakland, CA with activists, patients, industry and legal experts,” the German Consulate San Francisco Twitter page posted. The account shared images and noted that committee members heard from Oaksterdam Chancellor Dale Sky Jones, cannabis lawyer Robert Raich, and Ananda Strategy Founder Hirsh Jain, to name a few key educators. Other social media posts showed council members exploring products in a social equity dispensary, and talking with SC Labs President and co-founder Josh Wurzer as well.



MOVING ON UP

The Nevada Cannabis Compliance Board (CCB) published cannabis sales data on Sept. 30, showing that the state collected \$965 million in combined medical and adult-use purchases between July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022. Although this was a decrease compared to the 2021 fiscal year (a collection of just over \$1 billion) but a large increase from the 2020 fiscal year (which netted only \$685 million). A large portion of the 2022 fiscal year sales data was collected in Clark County (\$754,357,922) which is home to Las Vegas, Nevada’s most populated city. Through the state’s 10% excise tax, as well as a portion of the 15% wholesale adult and medical cannabis tax, \$147 million was transferred to the State Education Fund which funds the state’s K–12 budget. In June 2021, Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak approved a bill to legalize cannabis consumption lounges, and in June 2022 the CCB announced its approval of Cannabis Consumption Lounge regulations, which could contribute to a higher overall sales number for the 2023 fiscal year if or when applicants are approved and begin operating in 2023. “In addition to outlining the licensing and operation of consumption lounges, regulations approved today lay the groundwork for greater inclusion within Nevada’s cannabis industry,” the CCB wrote in its announcement. It explained the requirement for applicants to present a diversity plan and other steps for “meaningful inclusion,” and that half of the licenses must be granted to social equity applicants.

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HOT PRODUCTS

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edie-parker.com



Edie Parker presents their cannabis-friendly line “Weedie Parker” with a **mini grass bag** you can store your grass in. There’s a handy pocket in the interior of this bag to hide your contraband belongings, and a magnetic closure. This homage to grass looks like artificial grass. The team behind Edie Parker were determined to develop a cannabis-inspired fashion line, and we think they’ve nailed it with this particular mini bag. Edie Parker also has a collaboration with Paul Arnhold Glass in a colorful line with bongs that were hand-blown in Brooklyn, New York.

\$275



TO THE LEFT

leftcoastextracts.info



You gotta love NYC Diesel, the classic cross between Mexican and Afghani landraces. The strain comes from Amsterdam-based seed bank Soma Seeds which released it in 1997. Left Coast’s pod line adopts a dual-barrel design that is interchangeable with similar brands. The **Left Coast Extracts NYC Diesel vape pod** tastes strongly of grapefruit with a pinch of petrol. The pod didn’t solidify and clog up after several weeks of use, a typical problem we encounter with other vape cartridges.

Prices vary



STAY PSYCHED

amandasiebert.com

We're living amid a psychedelic renaissance as the medical world embraces psychedelic-assisted therapy and medicine. Award-winning journalist Amanda Siebert, author of *The Little Book of Cannabis: How Marijuana Can Improve Your Life*, released her second book on Oct. 18 entitled *Psyched: Seven Cutting-Edge Psychedelics Changing the World*. The book delves into the history and medical potential of psilocybin, MDMA, ketamine, ayahuasca, iboga, LSD, and peyote. The forward was written by Julie Holland, M.D. who works as a psychiatrist and psychopharmacologist.

\$16.95



BRICK BY BRICK

brickcraftofficial.com



If you're an adult and you're going to be playing with plastic bricks you gotta be stoned for it. Brickcraft collaborated with the Bob Marley estate to launch the **Bob Marley Building Kit** to honor the star who most consider to be the greatest reggae artist of all time. It comes with 2,025 pieces, six baseplates, one picture frame, and you can choose from two Marley portraits when all the pieces are together. One features Marley's iconic smile, and the other one features him smoking, of course. When you've finished building the set, it measures 10" x 15" and you can hang it on your wall.

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COVID-19, CREATIVITY & CIGARETTES

What's the latest word on mixing alcohol and cannabis? I can't seem to do it without getting really nauseated but some of my friends are really into it.

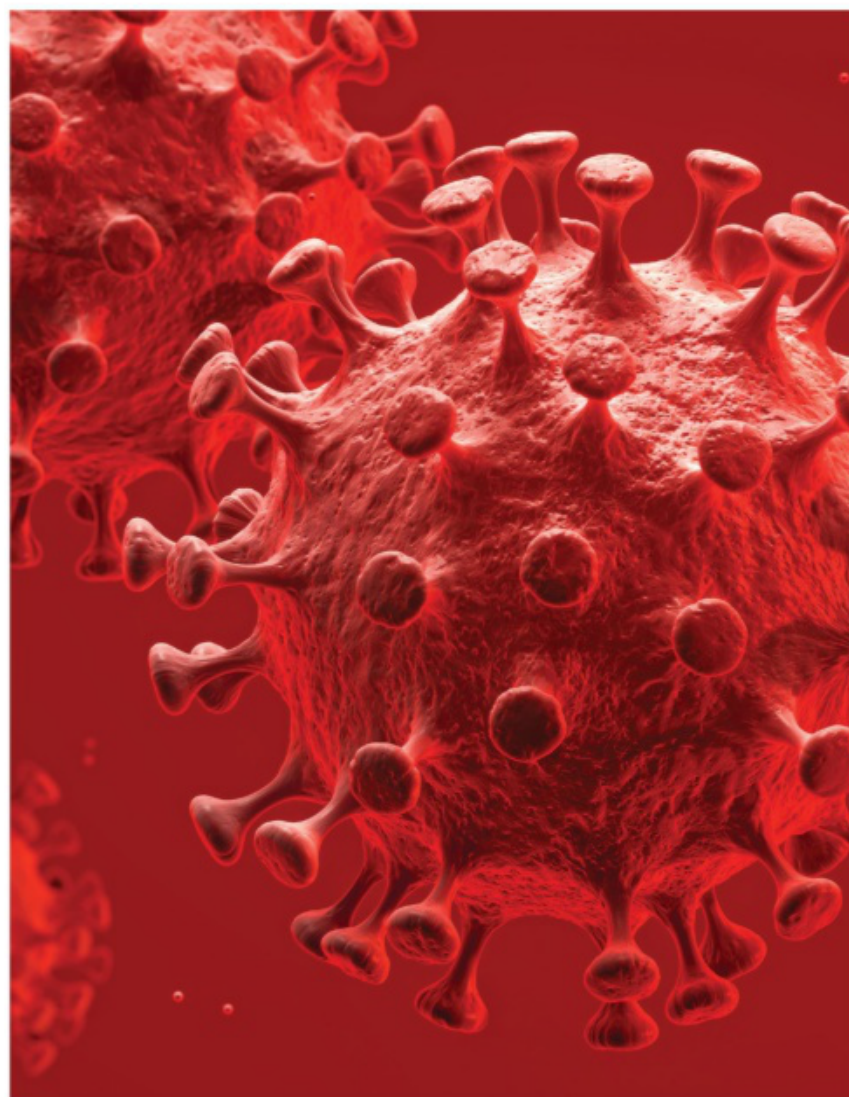
-Sir Mixer Not

Data confirms what your mom probably told you:

"Never mix, never worry."

Alcohol really is a toxin, as much as we tend to ignore the fact. Combining alcohol and cannabis can lead to more dramatic effects, including difficulties with complex motor tasks.

Bummers like blackouts are more likely, too. Generally,



"start low and go slow" still applies. A single drink consumed over an evening is probably no big deal. A bunch of shots in an hour, however, can get rough.

I heard CBD can fight against COVID-19. How much do I need? How long should I take it?

-Al Ternite

WHOA! Most of the research so far has only been conducted in rodents or cells in petri dishes. In one study, humans who took 100 mg of CBD a day ended up with a 6.2% rate of COVID-19; controls had an 8.9% rate. I guess every little improvement helps, but it's just one study. It's too soon to make any promises.

Anything new in cannabis and creativity? I know the

songs I write get better.

-C.C. Viber

New data suggest that THC makes folks more jovial, leading them to rate ideas as more creative. Consumers usually outscore non-consumers on creativity measures, but personality variations usually account for the differences. (Creative folks, who are often more open to new ideas, are also open to cannabis use.)

None of my friends who worship the cannabis plant smoke cigarettes. I think it makes you more aware of your health.

-Jim Bunny

Actually, cigarette smokers are two to 10 times more likely to use cannabis. You must just have some healthy pals. 



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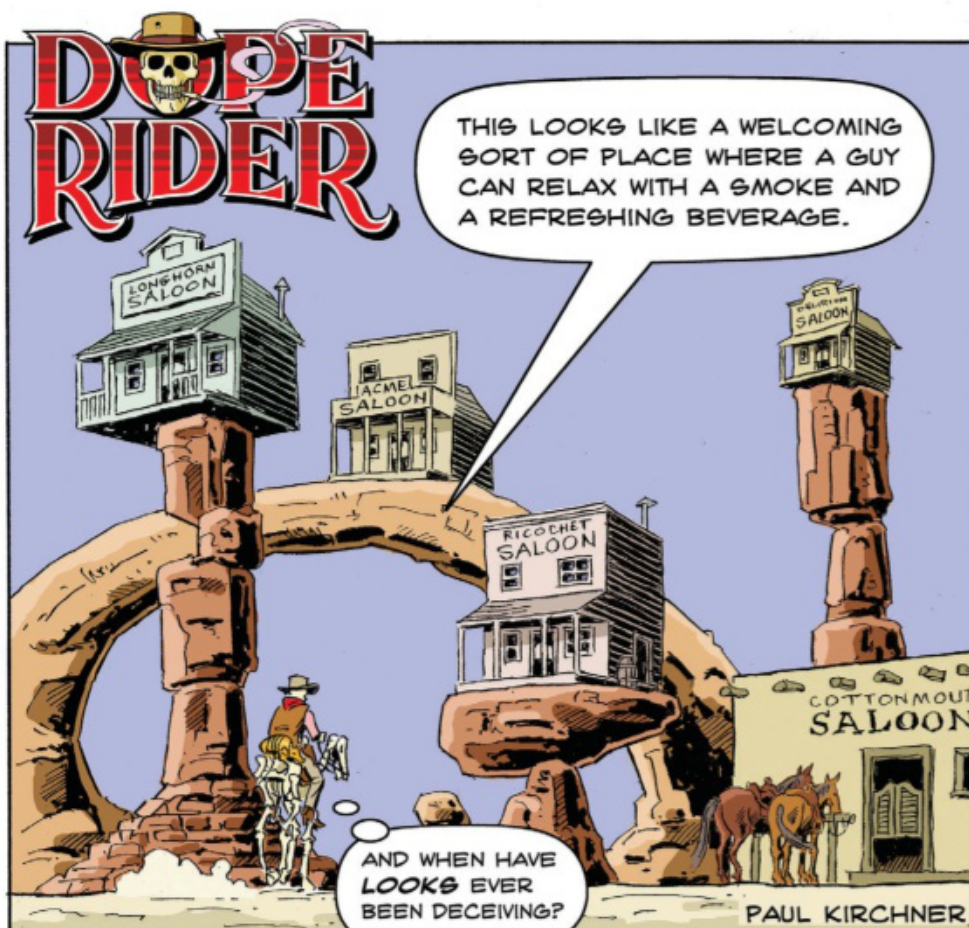
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